
MAINE

ESEA Flexibility

Request for Window 3



September 6, 2012

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

OMB Number: 1810-0581

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0581. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 336 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is offering each State educational agency (SEA) the opportunity to request flexibility on behalf of itself, its local educational agencies (LEAs), and its schools, in order to better focus on improving student learning and increasing the quality of instruction. This voluntary opportunity will provide educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. This flexibility is intended to build on and support the significant State and local reform efforts already underway in critical areas such as transitioning to college- and career-ready standards and assessments; developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support; and evaluating and supporting teacher and principal effectiveness.

The Department invites interested SEAs to request this flexibility pursuant to the authority in section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), which allows the Secretary to waive, with certain exceptions, any statutory or regulatory requirement of the ESEA for an SEA that receives funds under a program authorized by the ESEA and requests a waiver. Under this flexibility, the Department would grant waivers through the 2014–2015 school year.

Review and Evaluation of Requests

The Department will use a review process that will include both external peer reviewers and staff reviewers to evaluate SEA requests for this flexibility. This review process will help ensure that each request for this flexibility approved by the Department is consistent with the principles described in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which are designed to support State efforts to improve student academic achievement and increase the quality of instruction, and is both educationally and technically sound. Reviewers will evaluate whether and how each request for this flexibility will support a comprehensive and coherent set of improvements in the areas of standards and assessments, accountability, and teacher and principal effectiveness that will lead to improved student outcomes. Each SEA will have an opportunity, if necessary, to clarify its plans for peer and staff reviewers and to answer any questions reviewers may have. The peer reviewers will then provide comments to the Department. Taking those comments into consideration, the Secretary will make a decision regarding each SEA's request for this flexibility. If an SEA's request for this flexibility is not granted, reviewers and the Department will provide feedback to the SEA about the components of the SEA's request that need additional development in order for the request to be approved.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

An SEA seeking approval to implement this flexibility must submit a high-quality request that addresses all aspects of the principles and waivers and, in each place where a plan is required, includes a high-quality plan. Consistent with ESEA section 9401(d)(1), the Secretary intends to grant waivers that are included in this flexibility through the end of the 2014–2015 school year for SEAs that request the flexibility in “Window 3” (*i.e.*, the September 2012 submission window for peer review in October 2012). The Department is asking SEAs to submit requests that include plans through the 2014–2015 school year in order to provide a complete picture of the SEA’s reform efforts. The Department will not accept a request that meets only some of the principles of this flexibility.

This *ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3* is intended for use by SEAs requesting ESEA flexibility in September 2012 for peer review in October 2012. The timelines incorporated into this request reflect the timelines for the waivers, key principles, and action items of ESEA flexibility for an SEA that is requesting flexibility in this third window.

High-Quality Request: A high-quality request for this flexibility is one that is comprehensive and coherent in its approach, and that clearly indicates how this flexibility will help an SEA and its LEAs improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students.

A high-quality request will (1) if an SEA has already met a principle, provide a description of how it has done so, including evidence as required; and (2) if an SEA has not yet met a principle, describe how it will meet the principle on the required timelines, including any progress to date. For example, an SEA that has not adopted minimum guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with Principle 3 by the time it submits its request for the flexibility will need to provide a plan demonstrating that it will do so by the end of the 2012–2013 school year. In each such case, an SEA’s plan must include, at a minimum, the following elements for each principle that the SEA has not yet met:

1. **Key milestones and activities:** Significant milestones to be achieved in order to meet a given principle, and essential activities to be accomplished in order to reach the key milestones. The SEA should also include any essential activities that have already been completed or key milestones that have already been reached so that reviewers can understand the context for and fully evaluate the SEA’s plan to meet a given principle.
2. **Detailed timeline:** A specific schedule setting forth the dates on which key activities will begin and be completed and milestones will be achieved so that the SEA can meet the principle by the required date.
3. **Party or parties responsible:** Identification of the SEA staff (*e.g.*, position, title, or office) and, as appropriate, others who will be responsible for ensuring that each key activity is accomplished.
4. **Evidence:** Where required, documentation to support the plan and demonstrate the SEA’s progress in implementing the plan. This *ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3* indicates the specific evidence that the SEA must either include in its request or provide at a future reporting date.

5. Resources: Resources necessary to complete the key activities, including staff time and additional funding.
6. Significant obstacles: Any major obstacles that may hinder completion of key milestones and activities (*e.g.*, State laws that need to be changed) and a plan to overcome them.

Included on page 19 of this document is an example of a format for a table that an SEA may use to submit a plan that is required for any principle of this flexibility that the SEA has not already met. An SEA that elects to use this format may also supplement the table with text that provides an overview of the plan.

An SEA should keep in mind the required timelines for meeting each principle and develop credible plans that allow for completion of the activities necessary to meet each principle. Although the plan for each principle will reflect that particular principle, as discussed above, an SEA should look across all plans to make sure that it puts forward a comprehensive and coherent request for this flexibility.

Preparing the Request: To prepare a high-quality request, it is extremely important that an SEA refer to all of the provided resources, including the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, which includes the principles, definitions, and timelines; the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance for Window 3*, which includes the criteria that will be used by the peer reviewers to determine if the request meets the principles of this flexibility; and the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions*, which provides additional guidance for SEAs in preparing their requests.

As used in this request form, the following terms have the definitions set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*: (1) college- and career-ready standards, (2) focus school, (3) high-quality assessment, (4) priority school, (5) reward school, (6) standards that are common to a significant number of States, (7) State network of institutions of higher education, (8) student growth, and (9) turnaround principles.

Each request must include:

- A table of contents and a list of attachments, using the forms on pages 1 and 2.
- The cover sheet (p. 3), waivers requested (p. 4-6), and assurances (p. 7-8).
- A description of how the SEA has met the consultation requirements (p. 9).
- Evidence and plans to meet the principles (p. 10-18). An SEA will enter narrative text in the text boxes provided, complete the required tables, and provide other required evidence. An SEA may supplement the narrative text in a text box with attachments, which will be included in an appendix. Any supplemental attachments that are included in an appendix must be referenced in the related narrative text.

Requests should not include personally identifiable information.

Process for Submitting the Request: An SEA must submit a request to the Department to receive the flexibility. This request form and other pertinent documents are available on the Department's Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility>.

Electronic Submission: The Department strongly prefers to receive an SEA’s request for the flexibility electronically. The SEA should submit it to the following address:
ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

Paper Submission: In the alternative, an SEA may submit the original and two copies of its request for the flexibility to the following address:

Paul S. Brown, Acting Director
Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3W320
Washington, DC 20202-6132

Due to potential delays in processing mail sent through the U.S. Postal Service, SEAs are encouraged to use alternate carriers for paper submissions.

REQUEST SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The submission due date for Window 3 is September 6, 2012.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SEAS

The Department has conducted a number of webinars to assist SEAs in preparing their requests and to respond to questions. Please visit the Department’s Web site at:
<http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility> for copies of previously conducted webinars and information on upcoming webinars.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions, please contact the Department by e-mail at ESEAflexibility@ed.gov.

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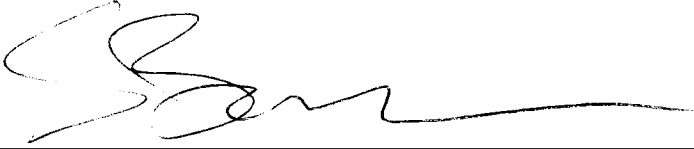
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For each attachment included in the *ESEA Flexibility Request for Window 3*, label the attachment with the corresponding number from the list of attachments below and indicate the page number where the attachment is located. If an attachment is not applicable to the SEA's request, indicate "N/A" instead of a page number. Reference relevant attachments in the narrative portions of the request.

LABEL	LIST OF ATTACHMENTS	PAGE
1	Notice to LEAs	A - 1
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4	Evidence that the State has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with the State's standards adoption process	A - 35
5	Memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs) certifying that meeting the State's standards corresponds to being college- and career-ready without the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level	A - 47
6	State's Race to the Top Assessment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	A - 56
7	Evidence that the SEA has submitted high-quality assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review, or a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review (if applicable)	N/A
8	A copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011-2012 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups (if applicable)	A - 74
9	Table 2: Reward, Priority, and Focus Schools	A - 77
10	A copy of the guidelines that the SEA has developed and adopted for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems (if applicable)	N/A
11	Evidence that the SEA has adopted all of the guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems	N/A

LABEL	LIST OF APPENDICES	PAGE
1	"Education Evolving: Maine's Plan for Putting Learners First," Maine Department of Education Strategic Plan, January 2012:	App - 1
2	Common Core ELA and Mathematics Implementation Plans	App - 38
3	"Global Best Practices Toolkit"	App - 49
4	Maine's Educator Effectiveness Law; Public Law 2011, chapter 635 (LD 1858)	App - 100
5	Lewiston Public Schools Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Program, part of the Maine Schools for Excellence project	App - 109
6	Maine Educator Effectiveness Council Agendas	App - 139

COVER SHEET FOR ESEA FLEXIBILITY REQUEST

Legal Name of Requester: Maine Department of Education	Requester's Mailing Address: 23 State House Station Augusta, Maine 04333
State Contact for the ESEA Flexibility Request Name: Deborah C. Friedman Position and Office: Director of Policy and Programs, Office of the Commissioner Contact's Mailing Address: 23 State House Station Augusta, Maine 04333 Telephone: 207-624-6620 Fax: 207-624-6601 Email address: Deborah.friedman@maine.gov	
Chief State School Officer (Printed Name): Stephen L. Bowen	Telephone: 207-624-6620
Signature of the Chief State School Officer: 	Date: September 6, 2012
The State, through its authorized representative, agrees to meet all principles of the ESEA Flexibility.	

WAIVERS

By submitting this flexibility request, the SEA requests flexibility through waivers of the ten ESEA requirements listed below and their associated regulatory, administrative, and reporting requirements by checking each of the boxes below. The provisions below represent the general areas of flexibility requested; a chart appended to the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Frequently Asked Questions* enumerates each specific provision of which the SEA requests a waiver, which the SEA incorporates into its request by reference.

- ☒ 1. The requirements in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(E)-(H) that prescribe how an SEA must establish annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) to ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement on the State's assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than the end of the 2013–2014 school year. The SEA requests this waiver to develop new ambitious but achievable AMOs in reading/language arts and mathematics in order to provide meaningful goals that are used to guide support and improvement efforts for the State, LEAs, schools, and student subgroups.
- ☒ 2. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(b) for an LEA to identify for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, as appropriate, a Title I school that fails, for two consecutive years or more, to make AYP, and for a school so identified and its LEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA and its Title I schools need not comply with these requirements.
- ☒ 3. The requirements in ESEA section 1116(c) for an SEA to identify for improvement or corrective action, as appropriate, an LEA that, for two consecutive years or more, fails to make AYP, and for an LEA so identified and its SEA to take certain improvement actions. The SEA requests this waiver so that it need not comply with these requirements with respect to its LEAs.
- ☒ 4. The requirements in ESEA sections 6213(b) and 6224(e) that limit participation in, and use of funds under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs based on whether an LEA has made AYP and is complying with the requirements in ESEA section 1116. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA that receives SRSA or RLIS funds may use those funds for any authorized purpose regardless of whether the LEA makes AYP.
- ☒ 5. The requirement in ESEA section 1114(a)(1) that a school have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more in order to operate a schoolwide program. The SEA requests this waiver so that an LEA may implement interventions consistent with the turnaround principles or interventions that are based on the needs of the students in the school and designed to enhance the entire educational program in a school in any of its priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*, as appropriate, even if those schools do not have a poverty percentage of 40 percent or more.

- ☒ 6. The requirement in ESEA section 1003(a) for an SEA to distribute funds reserved under that section only to LEAs with schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may allocate section 1003(a) funds to its LEAs in order to serve any of the State’s priority and focus schools that meet the definitions of “priority schools” and “focus schools,” respectively, set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.
- ☒ 7. The provision in ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) that authorizes an SEA to reserve Title I, Part A funds to reward a Title I school that (1) significantly closed the achievement gap between subgroups in the school; or (2) has exceeded AYP for two or more consecutive years. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may use funds reserved under ESEA section 1117(c)(2)(A) for any of the State’s reward schools that meet the definition of “reward schools” set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.
- ☒ 8. The requirements in ESEA section 2141(a), (b), and (c) for an LEA and SEA to comply with certain requirements for improvement plans regarding highly qualified teachers. The SEA requests this waiver to allow the SEA and its LEAs to focus on developing and implementing more meaningful evaluation and support systems.
- ☒ 9. The limitations in ESEA section 6123 that limit the amount of funds an SEA or LEA may transfer from certain ESEA programs to other ESEA programs. The SEA requests this waiver so that it and its LEAs may transfer up to 100 percent of the funds it receives under the authorized programs among those programs and into Title I, Part A.
- ☒ 10. The requirements in ESEA section 1003(g)(4) and the definition of a Tier I school in Section I.A.3 of the School Improvement Grants (SIG) final requirements. The SEA requests this waiver so that it may award SIG funds to an LEA to implement one of the four SIG models in any of the State’s priority schools that meet the definition of “priority schools” set forth in the document titled *ESEA Flexibility*.

Optional Flexibilities:

If an SEA chooses to request waivers of any of the following requirements, it should check the corresponding box(es) below:

- ☐ 11. The requirements in ESEA sections 4201(b)(1)(A) and 4204(b)(2)(A) that restrict the activities provided by a community learning center under the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program to activities provided only during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (*i.e.*, before and after school or during summer recess). The SEA requests this waiver so that 21st CCLC funds may be used to support expanded learning time during the school day in addition to activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session.
- ☒ 12. The requirements in ESEA sections 1116(a)(1)(A)-(B) and 1116(c)(1)(A) that require LEAs and SEAs to make determinations of adequate yearly progress (AYP) for schools and LEAs, respectively. The SEA requests this waiver because continuing to determine whether an LEA and its schools make AYP is inconsistent with the SEA’s State-developed differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system included in its ESEA flexibility request. The

SEA and its LEAs must report on their report cards performance against the AMOs for all subgroups identified in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v), and use performance against the AMOs to support continuous improvement in Title I schools.

- ☒ 13. The requirements in ESEA section 1113(a)(3)-(4) and (c)(1) that require an LEA to serve eligible schools under Title I in rank order of poverty and to allocate Title I, Part A funds based on that rank ordering. The SEA requests this waiver in order to permit its LEAs to serve a Title I-eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60 percent that the SEA has identified as a priority school even if that school does not otherwise rank sufficiently high to be served under ESEA section 1113.

ASSURANCES

By submitting this request, the SEA assures that:

- ☒ 1. It requests waivers of the above-referenced requirements based on its agreement to meet Principles 1 through 4 of the flexibility, as described throughout the remainder of this request.
- ☒ 2. It will adopt English language proficiency (ELP) standards that correspond to the State's college- and career-ready standards, consistent with the requirement in ESEA section 3113(b)(2), and that reflect the academic language skills necessary to access and meet the new college- and career-ready standards, no later than the 2013–2014 school year. (Principle 1)
- ☒ 3. It will develop and administer no later than the 2014–2015 school year alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that are consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2) and are aligned with the State's college- and career-ready standards. (Principle 1)
- ☒ 4. It will develop and administer ELP assessments aligned with the State's ELP standards, consistent with the requirements in ESEA sections 1111(b)(7), 3113(b)(2), and 3122(a)(3)(A)(ii). (Principle 1)
- ☒ 5. It will report annually to the public on college-going and college credit-accumulation rates for all students and subgroups of students in each LEA and each public high school in the State. (Principle 1)
- ☒ 6. If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and uses achievement on those assessments to identify priority and focus schools, it has technical documentation, which can be made available to the Department upon request, demonstrating that the assessments are administered statewide; include all students, including by providing appropriate accommodations for English Learners and students with disabilities, as well as alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards or alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.6(a)(2); and are valid and reliable for use in the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system. (Principle 2)
- ☒ 7. It will report to the public its lists of reward schools, priority schools, and focus schools at the time the SEA is approved to implement the flexibility, and annually thereafter, it will publicly recognize its reward schools as well as make public its lists of priority and focus schools if it chooses to update those lists. (Principle 2)
- ☒ 8. Prior to submitting this request, it provided student growth data on their current students and the students they taught in the previous year to, at a minimum, all teachers of reading/language arts and mathematics in grades in which the State administers assessments in those subjects in a

manner that is timely and informs instructional programs, or it will do so no later than the deadline required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. (Principle 3)

- ☒ 9. It will evaluate and, based on that evaluation, revise its own administrative requirements to reduce duplication and unnecessary burden on LEAs and schools. (Principle 4)
- ☒ 10. It has consulted with its Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in its request.
- ☒ 11. Prior to submitting this request, it provided all LEAs with notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment on the request and has attached a copy of that notice (Attachment 1) as well as copies of any comments it received from LEAs (Attachment 2).
- ☒ 12. Prior to submitting this request, it provided notice and information regarding the request to the public in the manner in which the State customarily provides such notice and information to the public (*e.g.*, by publishing a notice in the newspaper; by posting information on its website) and has attached a copy of, or link to, that notice (Attachment 3).
- ☒ 13. It will provide to the Department, in a timely manner, all required reports, data, and evidence regarding its progress in implementing the plans contained throughout this request.
- ☒ 14. It will report annually on its State report card, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report on their local report cards, for the “all students” group and for each subgroup described in ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II): information on student achievement at each proficiency level; data comparing actual achievement levels to the State’s annual measurable objectives; the percentage of students not tested; performance on the other academic indicator for elementary and middle schools; and graduation rates for high schools. It will also annually report, and will ensure that its LEAs annually report, all other information and data required by ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C) and 1111(h)(2)(B), respectively.

If the SEA selects Option A in section 3.A of its request, indicating that it has not yet developed and adopted all the guidelines for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems, it must also assure that:

- ☒ 15. It will submit to the Department for peer review and approval a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2012–2013 school year. (Principle 3)

CONSULTATION

An SEA must meaningfully engage and solicit input from diverse stakeholders and communities in the development of its request. To demonstrate that an SEA has done so, the SEA must provide an assurance that it has consulted with the State’s Committee of Practitioners regarding the information set forth in the request and provide the following:

1. *A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from teachers and their representatives.*

After nearly 12 months of thoughtful and frequent conversations with educators, students, parents, and business and community members across the state, Maine has decided to take advantage of this waiver opportunity. We believe the flexibility provided – especially the ability to more meaningfully define proficiency while also considering student growth, and the ability to provide a broader range of school-based supports with fewer restrictions – will better inform and support school improvement across the state.

Once a determination was made to pursue ESEA flexibility, a plan was created that enabled more focused discussions on the request for flexibility.. Since the beginning of May 2012, four workgroups consisting of teachers, principals, superintendents, and DOE staff members have worked tirelessly and shared their wisdom and insight to develop Maine’s ESEA waiver request.

1. The Steering Committee consisted of a district administrator of English Learner services, the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Education and key Department staff, and executive directors from our professional organizations (Maine Education Association (MEA), Maine School Superintendents Association (MSSA), Maine School Boards Association (MSBA), Maine Principals’ Association (MPA) and the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC)). The Steering Committee provided overall guidance and ongoing engagement with stakeholders.
2. The Annual Measurable Objectives Workgroup developed the methodology for determining overall student proficiency targets, the School Accountability Index, and the method of placing schools into one of several school performance levels as required by U.S. Department of Education. The methodology was refined as feedback was received through public meetings and surveys; AMOs and the School Accountability Index were finalized on August 30, 2012.
3. The Interventions and Supports Workgroup helped design a system of comprehensive and responsive improvement activities in which our lowest performing schools must engage and crafted the array of resources that will be provided to help them
4. The Maine Educator Effectiveness Council, established by the Legislature in the spring of 2012, has been working on its charge of proposing a system of performance evaluation and professional growth (PE/PG). The Council’s foundational work during the summer of 2012 provides sufficient evidence to the USDE that a collaborative process is underway to ensure

creation and implementation of a thoughtful and informed system to evaluate and support teachers and leaders.

Below are the Workgroup descriptions and membership lists :

Steering Committee

Charge:

1. Finalize membership in the working groups;
2. Provide overview, guidance, and support to each of the working groups;
3. Receive the reports of the working groups and craft the core components of a statewide accountability system to recommend to the Commissioner;
4. Support the engagement of key stakeholder groups, including members of representing all official student subgroups

Deliverables

1. Clarified charge for each of the working groups
2. List of recommended individuals to serve in the working groups
3. List of individuals and/or organizations representing students from various subgroups
4. Input and feedback from individuals and/or organizations representing students from various subgroups
5. Recommended elements of statewide accountability system that meet the requirements of the current ESEA Flexibility program and, if applicable, any future guidance resulting from a reauthorized ESEA
6. Formal presentation(s) of the statewide accountability model to education stakeholders across the state

Steering Committee Membership

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Representing</i>
Steve Bowen	Commissioner	Maine Department of Education
Dick Durost	Executive Director	Maine Principals' Association
Dale Douglass	Executive Director	Maine School Boards Association
Sandra MacArthur	Executive Director	Maine School Superintendents' Association
Jill Adams	Executive Director	Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities
Rob Walker	Executive Director	Maine Education Association

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Representing</i>
Lois Kilby-Chesley	President	Maine Education Association
Robin Fleck	ELL Coordinator, Auburn School Department	Participating at the request of the Maine DOE
Jaci Holmes	Federal-State Legislative Liaison	Maine DOE
Dan Hupp	Director of Standards and Assessment	Maine DOE
Rachelle Tome	ESEA Federal Programs Director	Maine DOE
David Connerty-Marin	Communications Director	Maine DOE
Deb Friedman	Director, Policy and Programs	Maine DOE
Mark Kostin	Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership	Facilitator

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) Working Group

Charge:

1. Identify the student assessments that will be used to determine the level of proficiency of students (all and subgroups) in a school
2. Determine additional student learning measures, if applicable, to be used
3. Determine specific proficiency benchmarks to be used to determine a school's accountability status
4. Propose at least four different levels of school performance commensurate with the ESEA flexibility guidelines (i.e. priority, focus, and reward)
5. Work with the Interventions & Support Working Group to determine the manner in which schools and/or districts can exit any identified status associated with poor performance

Deliverables

1. List of student learning assessments
2. List of other measures of student learning
3. List of AMO targets by year
4. List of school and/or district performance designations
5. Process by which schools and/or districts deemed poor performance leave their status

AMO Working Group Membership

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Appointed by:</i>
Paul Austin	Special Services Director, Brunswick School Department	Maine Administrators of Services to Children with Disabilities
Barbara Powers	Superintendent, Falmouth School Department	Maine School Superintendents Association
Amanda Cooper	Teacher, Gorham Middle School	Maine Education Association
Linda MacKenzie	Principal, Stearns High School	Maine Principals' Association
Kristin Wells	ESL Teacher, K-12, Wells-Ogunquit CSD	Serving at the request of the Maine DOE
Steve Bowen	Commissioner, Maine Department of Education	Maine DOE
Rachelle Tome	ESEA Federal Programs Director	Maine DOE
Deb Friedman	Director, Policy and Programs	Maine DOE
Dan Hupp	Director of Standards and Assessments	Maine DOE
Nancy Mullins	Director of ESL and Bilingual Programs	Maine DOE
Bill Hurwitch	Project Manager, SLDS	Maine DOE
George Tucker	Distinguished Educator, School Improvement Consultant	Maine DOE
Mark Kostin	Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership	Facilitator

Interventions and Supports Workgroup (I&S)

Charge:

1. Determine and name at least four levels of overall student and/or district performance compared to the established AMOs.
2. These performance levels must meet the stated requirements of the current ESEA flexibility opportunity (i.e. priority, focus, and reward) and any other guidance resulting from reauthorization of ESEA
3. Determine the support to be provided and the interventions to be implemented for schools and/or districts that have been identified, commensurate with the specific areas of need
4. Determine the process by which schools and/or districts identified as needing support will be identified and apply for funds

5. Develop the system by which the DOE will provide ongoing support for schools and/or districts in this category
6. Develop the manner in which reward schools will be recognized along with any other possible relief and/or compensation
7. Determine the manner in which schools and/or districts can exit their stated status
8. Work in conjunction with the AMO Working Group when necessary

Deliverables

1. List and description of status categories
2. Document outlining the differentiated support and interventions based on performance categories
3. Process for accessing and monitoring the use of targeted resources
4. Description of DOE intervention and support model
5. List of recognitions, relief, and/or compensation for reward schools
6. Description of steps for exiting status

I&S Workgroup Membership

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Appointed by:</i>
Deborah Emery	Principal, Henry Cottrell School, Monmouth (RSU 2)	Maine Principals' Association
Susan Pratt	Superintendent, RSU 40 (Union)	Maine Superintendents' Association
Joyce Blakney	Mathematics Teacher, Waterville High School	Maine Education Association
Steve Bowen	Commissioner	Maine DOE
Rachelle Tome	ESEA Federal Programs Director	Maine DOE
Deb Friedman	Director, Policy and Programs	Maine DOE
Steve Vose	Title 1-A School Improvement	Maine DOE
Mark Kostin	Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership	Facilitator

Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC)

(Charge and Membership Specified in Public Law 2011, chapter 635, LD 1858)

Charge:

Recommend the following elements of a "Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth System:

- Sets of Professional Practice Standards for Teacher and for Principals
- A 4-level rating scale with clear definitions
- Potential measures of student learning and growth
- Major components of an evaluation process, e.g., training, methods of gathering evidence, weighting of measures
- A system of supports and professional development linked to ratings, including professional improvement plan

Deliverables:

Recommendations for transmittal to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, by November 1, 2012, regarding the matters listed above.

MEEC Membership

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Interest Represented</i>
Linda Bleile	Principal, Wiscasset Middle School	Maine Principal's Association
Steve Bowen	Commissioner	Maine DOE
James Cote	President & CEO, Associated Builders and Contractors	Business Community
Brian Doore	Assistant Research Professor, University of Maine	Faculty of an approved educator preparation program
Becky Fles	School Board Chair, RSU 11 (Gardiner)	Maine School Boards Association
Susan Grondin	English Language Arts Teacher, Lewiston Middle School	Maine Education Association
Chris Hall	VP, Government Relations Portland Regional Chamber	Business Community
Scott Harrison	Project Director, Maine Schools for Excellence	Public Member
Maureen King	School Board Member, RSU 21	Maine School Boards Association
Grace Leavitt	Foreign Language and Literature Teacher, Greely High School	Maine Education Association
Linda McLeod	Principal, Indian Island School	Maine Indian Education
Barbara Moody	Director of Teacher Education, Husson University	Public Member

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Interest Represented</i>
Mary Payne	Teacher, Messalonskee High School	Maine Education Association
Sylvia Pease	Superintendent, SAD 55 (Hiram)	Maine School Superintendents Association
Nancy Perkins	Chair, Certification Committee Maine State Board of Education	Maine State Board of Education
John Soifer	Special Education Teacher Skowhegan High School	Maine Education Association

Staff Resources (non-members)

Deb Friedman	Director, Policy and Programs, Maine DOE
Meghan Southworth	ESEA Title II Teacher Quality, Maine DOE
Mark Kostin	Associate Director, Great Schools Partnership, Facilitator

All 4 work groups consisted of representatives from the school, community, district, and state levels – teachers, principals, superintendents, board members, and other community members. The groups met at least once a month, as reflected in the list of meeting dates below:

2012 Meeting Dates

Steering Committee

- May 11, 9 to 11 am
- May 31, 9 to 11 am
- June 21, 2 to 4 pm
- July 25, 1 to 3 pm

Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) Workgroup

- May 22, 1 to 5 pm (Joint meeting with I&S)
- June 5, 8 am to noon
- June 20, noon to 4 pm
- July 2, 8 am to noon
- July 23, 8 am to noon
- August 14, 8 am to noon
- August 30, 3 pm to 4:30 pm

Interventions and Supports (I&S) Workgroup

- May 22, 1 to 5 pm (Joint meeting with AMO)
- June 13, 1 to 5 pm
- July 18, 9 am to 3 pm

- August 3, 8:30 am to noon
- August 16, 9:30 am to 12:30

Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC)

- May 29, 1 to 4 pm
- June 20, 9 am to 3 pm
- July 9, 9 am to 3 pm
- July 27, 9 am to 3 pm
- August 10, 9 am to 3 pm
- August 24, 9 am to 3 pm
- (Planned: September 14 and 28)

The list of Workgroup Meeting Dates is reorganized below by month, illustrating the iterative nature of the Steering Committee-Workgroup structure. This enabled the Steering Committee to receive updates on the work of the content-specific workgroups, and to provide feedback to the department on the progress of the workgroups.

May

- May 11 Steering Committee
- May 22 Joint Meeting of AMO and I&S
- May 29 MEEC
- May 31 Steering Committee

June

- June 5 AMO
- June 13 I&S
- June 20 AMO
- June 20 MEEC
- June 21 Steering Committee

July

- July 2 AMO
- July 9 MEEC
- July 18 I&S
- July 23 AMO
- July 25 Steering Committee
- July 27 MEEC

August

- August 3 I&S
- August 10 MEEC
- August 14 AMO
- August 16 I&S
- August 24 MEEC

- August 30 AMO

All of these Workgroup meetings were open to public and announced through Maine DOE Dispatches and the weekly Commissioner's Updates. (Dispatches are included in Commissioner's Updates, which have a subscriber list of 2860, including all superintendents in the State.) See Attachment 3 for a list of key public notice and comment opportunities.

As the meetings progressed, materials were posted on the ESEA Flexibility Website, and opportunities for providing comments were provided, including a web-based submittal opportunities and surveys. These were used to create the long-term agenda and to collect feedback as the discussions progressed.

The charge to the Workgroups was driven in part by the results of a Fall 2011 survey, which helped establish the direction of Maine's application. The Maine DOE also held Fall 2011 webinars to inform the public about the flexibility proposal from the USDE.

After all of these stakeholder recommendations were more fully developed by the Workgroups, a summary describing the major components of Maine's request was released through the Maine DOE website and via the Commissioner Update on August 16 (see Attachment 3). An online survey was developed to solicit feedback and ideas based on the summary and three public forums were held (including one online webinar) where the Commissioner described the plan and asked participants for their feedback and ideas. The feedback from the summary public comment sessions, the Workgroups' websites, and an August 2012 survey was collected and organized into categories corresponding to each of the Workgroups (see Attachment 2). The Workgroups were reconvened to consider the feedback and, where possible and appropriate, this proposal was modified.

2. *A description of how the SEA meaningfully engaged and solicited input on its request from other diverse communities, such as students, parents, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations representing students with disabilities and English Learners, business organizations, and Indian tribes.*

Maine DOE involved diverse communities in the development of the request by:

- Including professionals working with English Learners (AMO, Steering Committee), students with disabilities (Steering Committee, AMO), business organizations (MEEC) and Maine Indian Education schools (MEEC) on the working groups that developed various aspects of this application;
- Meeting with Portland and Bangor-area students in December of 2011 to get initial thoughts on how to measure the effectiveness of schools and teachers;
- Asking school professionals to invite parents of EL students and students with disabilities to attend public forums on the application;
- Personal communication with a representative of the Bangor Chapter of the NAACP, issuing an invitation to a public forum on the request; and

- Inviting general public engagement throughout the process of developing the request, through numerous press releases and Commissioner’s Update articles.

EVALUATION

The Department encourages an SEA that receives approval to implement the flexibility to collaborate with the Department to evaluate at least one program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs implement under principle 1, 2, or 3. Upon receipt of approval of the flexibility, an interested SEA will need to nominate for evaluation a program, practice, or strategy the SEA or its LEAs will implement under principles 1, 2, or 3. The Department will work with the SEA to determine the feasibility and design of the evaluation and, if it is determined to be feasible and appropriate, will fund and conduct the evaluation in partnership with the SEA, ensuring that the implementation of the chosen program, practice, or strategy is consistent with the evaluation design.

☐ Check here if you are interested in collaborating with the Department in this evaluation, if your request for the flexibility is approved.

**Maine elected to not participate in the Evaluation opportunity because it is likely to require Maine DOE staff resources to participate, even though the U.S. Department of Education pays for the evaluation to be conducted. Without knowing more about the required Maine DOE resources, we are reluctant to commit to participating in an evaluation.

OVERVIEW OF SEA'S REQUEST FOR THE ESEA FLEXIBILITY

Provide an overview (about 500 words) of the SEA's request for the flexibility that:

1. explains the SEA's comprehensive approach to implement the waivers and principles and describes the SEA's strategy to ensure this approach is coherent within and across the principles; and
2. describes how the implementation of the waivers and principles will enhance the SEA's and its LEAs' ability to increase the quality of instruction for students and improve student achievement.

In January of this year, Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen released a Strategic Plan for the Maine Department of Education that was developed in consultation with educators from across the state. (See Appendix 1) In the Plan's preface, Commissioner Bowen outlined four challenges that Maine confronts as it seeks to ensure that all of its young people graduate from its schools ready for college, careers, and civic life.

The first challenge is that student outcomes in Maine are stagnant, with test scores and graduation rates showing little growth. The second challenge is that this lack of achievement growth comes despite the state's compliance with the No Child Left behind Act of 2001, which imposed the state's current system of school and district accountability. Despite more than a decade of standardized testing, the identification of schools based on student outcomes and the imposition of a number of initiatives to turn around underperforming schools, student outcomes remain stubbornly flat.

The third challenge is that the failure of the No Child Left Behind model suggests that simply tweaking the existing accountability structure imposed by the law is not enough. What is needed is an entirely new approach to public schooling, an approach that adapts our schools to meet the needs of learners, rather than requiring learners to adapt to the needs of our schools.

The fourth challenge is that we must undertake this transformation from an industrial-age, factory-era model of schooling to a 21st century model of schooling that customizes learning for all students, and we must do it within existing resources. Building a new system of school and district accountability under an ESEA waiver is a critical step in the transformation Maine must undertake to meet these challenges. Educators across Maine, whose experience and insights drove the development of the Department's strategic plan, see the current accountability provisions of No Child Left Behind as significant barriers to transformation. Rather than providing educators with the tools necessary to meet the needs of all students, the current NCLB framework, stands in the way of meaningful change.

- Maine's goal with its ESEA flexibility proposal, therefore, is to take the first step in the development of a new state accountability system, one that supports the kind of systems change that meeting the challenges confronting us requires. If we are serious about meeting the needs of each individual learner, the state's accountability system must measure the progress of each student toward the attainment of college and career-ready standards.

- This assessment of student outcomes should use multiple measures that indicate not only a student's achievement of certain learning standards at a fixed point in time, but that student's achievement growth over the course of his or her school career.
- These measures of student achievement and growth should be used to determine the extent to which each Maine school and educator is meeting the needs of the students they serve. Such determinations should be reported in a manner that is clear and concise, providing educators, parents and the public with an accurate account of student outcomes.
- Schools that are identified as struggling to meet the learning needs of students be required to develop and implement detailed plans to improve student outcomes, and should be provided with targeted supports designed to support those improvement efforts.
- Educators who are identified, though a combination of measures of professional practice and assessments of student achievement and growth, should be provided with the professional development and support needed to help them meet the needs of all learners.

Maine's ESEA flexibility proposal is built around these core concepts, and is thus critical to the state's overall efforts, driven by the Strategic Plan, to build a more customized, student-centered educational system.

PRINCIPLE 1: COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

1.A ADOPT COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that are common to a significant number of States, consistent with part (1) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The State has adopted college- and career-ready standards in at least reading/language arts and mathematics that have been approved and certified by a State network of institutions of higher education (IHEs), consistent with part (2) of the definition of college- and career-ready standards.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the State has adopted the standards, consistent with the State’s standards adoption process. (Attachment 4)</p> <p>ii. Attach a copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter from a State network of IHEs certifying that students who meet these standards will not need remedial coursework at the postsecondary level. (Attachment 5)</p>
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The Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE) is deeply committed to establishing clear, ambitious, and rigorous learning standards that, when met, will provide students with a solid foundation that will enable them to be successful in the colleges and careers of their choice upon graduation. This work started at least fifteen years ago with the adoption of Maine’s *Learning Results* standards in 1996. These include content standards in eight areas, framed by an overarching set of Guiding Principles that describe the knowledge and skills believed necessary to prepare every student for college, careers and civic life. The eight content areas are: Career and Education Development; English Language Arts; Health Education and Physical Education; Mathematics; Science and Technology; Social Studies; Visual and Performing Arts; and World Languages.

Maine’s learning standards were revised in 2007, and are now called Maine *Learning Results: Parameters for Essential Instruction*, commonly referred to as the MLR’s. These revised standards reflect the knowledge and skills essential for college, career, and citizenship in the 21st century. They took effect on October 22, 2007.

Included in the MLRs is a set of cross-cutting 21st century skills, competencies and habits of mind deemed to be essential to success in the world beyond high school. These five broad skills are

intended to be practiced and assessed across all content areas beginning in Kindergarten and culminating in high school with increasing complexity and sophistication. These are summarized here and more fully described on the Maine DOE website:

<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/2007MLRGuidingPrinciples.pdf>. To succeed in the 21st century, a Maine graduate must be a:

1. Clear and effective communicator;
2. Self-directed and lifelong learner;
3. Creative and practical problem-solver;
4. Responsible and involved citizen; and
5. Integrated and informed thinker.

With the recent passage of legislation mandating a proficiency-based high school diploma, Maine's school districts will soon be required to certify that students are proficient in these skills – in addition to being proficient in the standards articulated in the eight content areas.

For purposes of state and federal accountability, a portion of the Maine Learning Results standards were adopted as a separate rule: DOE Rule Chapter 131. That rule includes Mathematics and English Language Arts standards that are used for federal accountability purposes, as well as Science standards that are used for state assessment purposes.

In the Spring of 2010, in anticipation of filing an application for Race-to-the-Top funds, the Maine DOE sought and received clear statutory authority to proceed with adoption of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English language arts. (See Attachment 4-d, Public Law 2009, chapter 647). That legislation authorized the Department to adopt the standards through Emergency Rulemaking. Since the State did not receive Race-to-the-Top funding, the Department elected to conduct a regular rulemaking process, rather than going through the temporary, fast-track Emergency process.

Maine has a somewhat unusual process for agency rulemaking, when the Legislature considers the rule to be “major substantive.” Those rules must go through a legislative process as well as the administrative rulemaking process. The agency starts the process by proposing a rule, holding a public hearing on the proposal and offering opportunity for written comment. Once the agency considers and responds to public comment, makes any changes needed to reflect public comment, the agency “provisionally” adopts the rule and files it with the Legislature for review and for authority to proceed to final adoption.

Maine DOE conducted the administrative rulemaking process to incorporate the Common Core Standards for ELA and Mathematics into Rule Chapter 131, between August 2 and October 7, 2010. The Department provisionally adopted the rule on October 7, 2010 and submitted it to the Legislature. As is customary for rules review, the Office of the Revisor of Statutes drafted a Resolve, LD 6, which proposed to authorize the DOE to finally adopt the Common Core as an amendment to Rule Chapter 131. The Resolve was referred to the Joint Standing Committee on Education, where it received unanimous approval, was ultimately passed by the full Legislature and was signed by Governor LePage. Evidence of final adoption, through a filing with the Secretary of State, is included in Attachment 4-a. Attachment 4-b is an excerpt from the adopted rule and Attachment 4-c is the Legislative Resolve authorizing final adoption of the rule.

1.B TRANSITION TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Provide the SEA’s plan to transition to and implement no later than the 2013–2014 school year college- and career-ready standards statewide in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for all students and schools and include an explanation of how this transition plan is likely to lead to all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, gaining access to and learning content aligned with such standards. The Department encourages an SEA to include in its plan activities related to each of the italicized questions in the corresponding section of the document titled *ESEA Flexibility Review Guidance for Window 3*, or to explain why one or more of those activities is not necessary to its plan.

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In anticipation of Common Core adoption, the Maine DOE developed a comprehensive roll-out plan to ensure awareness, facilitate transition and support implementation of the Common Core standards, and to ensure that all students were able to access and achieve the standards. The plan had four phases: 1) Common Core awareness across all impacted practitioners during the 2011-2012 school year, 2) initial transition to the Common Core in the 2012-2013 school year followed by 3) full implementation of the standards in the 2013-14 school year, and 4) Assessment beginning in the spring of 2015.

In an effort to avoid “the silo-ing syndrome” within the Department, a coordinated plan for transitioning to the Common Core was created incorporating all divisions and sub-teams within Maine DOE. Those divisions specifically targeted included:

- Content Specialists in all content areas with special focus on ELA and Mathematics (CS – ELA, CS- Math),
- Career and Technical Education (CTE),
- Higher Education (HE),
- Services for Students with Disabilities (SWD),
- English Learners (EL),
- Title 1 Continuous Improvement Priority Schools (CIPS),
- Title II A & B (TIIAB),
- Adult Education (AE),
- Maine’s Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI),
- Early Childhood Development (ECD),
- Standards Based Implementation Team (SBI),
- State Longitudinal Data System Team (SLDS),
- Communications and Public Information Team (CPI),
- Customized Learning Implementation (CLI).

From Early Childhood through Higher Education, the Maine DOE has coordinated the Common Core implementation process, with a team of Maine DOE staff members working across content areas to increase educator awareness of how the Common Core impacts their work.

The Maine DOE views the adoption of the Common Core as the focal point around which all educational programs can be coordinated in order to ensure that all students graduate from Maine high schools college, career and citizenship ready, fully equipped with the knowledge and skills required in the 21st century and requiring no remediation before embarking on their choice of post-secondary opportunities. In order to ensure that all students have a chance to achieve the standards, the Department expects that all Common Core professional development opportunities hosted/facilitated/sponsored by the Maine DOE content specialists will be designed to include professionals serving students with disabilities and English learners, as well as including education administrators.

The Maine DOE has invested heavily by dedicating staff to participate in Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) professional development opportunities with great benefit. Maine has participated (via a 6-member cross-agency team) in each of the Implementing the Common Core Standards SCASS meetings held during the past two years. Additionally, Department staff participate in the ELA, Mathematics, Science, and Special Education SCASS work. In each case, Maine DOE staff have received and contributed to the national creation and sharing of Common Core supports and materials.

Awareness:

Maine's strategy for increasing awareness of the Common Core was to integrate Common Core throughout its trainings. During the 2010-2011 school year Maine DOE held various workshops across the state, hosted by districts, regional curriculum groups, and higher education, to inform the field of the new standards and where to find information and support.

A webpage for mathematics, <http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/standards.html>, a webpage for English Language Arts, <http://maine.gov/education/lres/ela/standards.html>, and an overarching Common Core webpage for DOE, <http://maine.gov/education/lres/commoncore/index.html>, were developed.

Materials focusing on awareness are posted at the following site for the field to access under the introduction module for math and ELA: http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss_pd.html http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss_modules.html

The mathematics and English Language Arts specialists also made presentations at regional superintendent meetings and Career and Technical Education (CTE) director meetings across the state.

On June 25, 2012 the Maine DOE Math and ELA specialists presented at a conference sponsored by the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC) to inform special education directors and teachers of the new standards and where to find information and support.

Support for professional development for ELL teachers is found at: <http://www.maine.gov/education/esl/esllinks.htm>. On June 10, 2012 – June 15, 2012, a team from Maine DOE attended a five-day institute sponsored by The Illinois Resource Center (IRC) and World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) to learn a process focused on coordinating the use of multiple sets of standards to support the academic language development of language learners (ELL) focusing on the Common Core State Standards.

During the 2012-2013 school year the Maine DOE Math and ELA specialists will continue to ensure all teachers, including special education and EL, are aware of the standards and the implementation timeline.

On November 7, 2012 the Maine DOE Math and Science Specialists will hold a webinar providing a brief history of the CCSSM and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the resources available to help increase the awareness and communication among EL teachers and content area teachers.

Transition:

Maine DOE elected not to devote resources to completing a crosswalk document between the New England Common Assessment (NECAP) Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and the Common Core State Standards (Common Core) for Mathematics or English Language Arts. Instead, Maine DOE made available to the state's educators the crosswalk completed by Rhode Island, as we share the same NECAP standards. This work which identifies the shifts is located at:

http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/DOCS/CommonCore/CCSS_vs_GLE-GSE_Overview_Document-Mathematics.pdf

http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/DOCS/CommonCore/CCSS_vs_GLE-GSE_Overview_Document-ELA.pdf

Maine DOE in collaboration with the Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Maine (ATOMIM) offered a series of Dine and Discuss Sessions focusing on developing a deep understanding of the 8 Mathematical Practices in the 2010-2011 school year. During the 2011-2012 school year the Dine and Discuss Sessions target two audiences: elementary with a focus on algebraic thinking and the common core standards, and high school with a focus on reasoning and sense making and the common core standards.

Implementation:

Implementation of the Common Core will include adapting textbooks, changing materials, and adopting texts, with the goal to change practice in the classroom. The beginning of the implementation process began with a webinar series created and delivered to address alignment and implementation. These webinars and resource materials are posted at the following site for the field to access for math and ELA: http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss_pd.html

http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss_modules.html

Presentations by Maine DOE math and ELA Specialists at the annual ATOMIM conference were focused on implementation of the Common Core using the critical focus areas and also aligning tasks to the mathematical practices, mathematical content and content literacy standards.

The creation of a complete eighth grade digital math textbook, supporting the common core state standards, developed by a classroom teacher in collaboration with the Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) team is to be released as a full Open Educational Resource (OER) in September, 2012.

More detailed implementation plans for Mathematics and ELA can be found in Appendix 2.

Ongoing Support:

Ongoing support to improve instruction using Common Core standards will be provided in the 2012-2013 school year. Continuing to use the math standards as the example, Maine DOE and ATOMIM will again be offering Dine and Discuss sessions across the state focusing on the Common Core State standards. This year we will be looking at sample tasks from SBAC and the Illustrative Mathematics Project to help inform changes in instructional practices. A second topic of Dine and Discuss sessions will be to look to the NCSM support materials around the 8 Mathematical Practices and how they can be used in classrooms to help support student/teacher understanding.

Maine DOE mathematics specialists and Maine DOE MLTI will collaboratively provide full day PD sessions across the state looking at sample tasks aligned to the Common Core State Standards and use of technology to support student learning and understanding addressing content, pedagogy and technology knowledge. The sessions will be provided for the elementary, middle school, and high school level.

As with all PD, the materials used during the sessions provided will be posted on the department Math webpage: http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss_pd.html

An institute of Maine DOE ESL/Bilingual Programs in collaboration with Project Reach will host a 3-day Summer Academy during June 25-27, 2013 with the focus on “Working with Common Core State Standards (Common Core) and WIDA English Language Development Standards (ELD)” www.maine.gov/education/esl/conferences.htm

The Maine DOE has made available to districts four interactive **Common Core State Standards Noteshare Notebooks** organized by grade spans K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and High School. Contained in each of these interactive notebooks are professional development support materials for teachers to aid in the understanding and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

As a classroom teacher, time is limited for searching out support materials to gain a deep understanding of the new standards and how to align these to current classroom practices and curriculum. These notebooks have embedded links to resources in the appropriate place within the standards document. As teachers read through the document they have all the links to resources, webinars, and hands-on activities for supporting the transition to and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

There will be a series of webinars/PD sessions to inform teachers of this resource and how to best use the resource in their work at their district/classroom level. All PD opportunities will encourage all teachers of mathematics, Special Education and EL, to attend and participate. These notebooks can be found at:

Grades K-2: <http://mlti.cross.doe.msln.net/NoteShare/Notebooks/CommonCore/MathK2/>

Grades 3-5: <http://mlti.cross.doe.msln.net/NoteShare/Notebooks/CommonCore/math35/>

Grades 6-8: <http://mlti.cross.doe.msln.net/NoteShare/Notebooks/CommonCore/Math68/>

High School: estimated to be posted by mid-September

The notebooks will be updated on a regular basis as new resources and materials become available at both the state and national level.

Maine DOE will continue to work in collaboration with districts/schools, curriculum coordinators, and CTE directors to work with all staff to support understanding, transition, and implementation

of the Common Core across the state by providing professional development opportunities in various locations.

Maine's Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) team is aligning its PD and other work with the Common Core, to help educators use technology effectively in teaching to the Common Core standards. MLTI will be adding two new professional development integrators with language in the RFP specifically requesting Common Core integration. The team will be adding targeted content specific professional develop for the upcoming school year focusing on Common Core and digital citizenship. The team has and will continue to assist Common Core presentations with DOE personnel. Maine learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) professional development opportunities can be found at: <http://maine.gov/mlti/events/index.shtml>

Educators working with students with disabilities will benefit from work being done through the state's 2011 State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). Goal 3 for the SPDG work is to increase the number of Maine special educators who write and implement IEPs so that they are aligned with the Common Core in ELA and math. It is the intent of the Implementation Team to design and develop a statewide sustainable PD plan that will provide training and technical assistance to all SAUs. The following school districts are involved in the work: RSU #2, RSU #15, and Westbrook. There have been 4 planning meetings held to date, with future planning meetings scheduled to occur throughout the 2012/2013 school year. Statewide training for special educators is due to begin in the Spring and Fall of 2013.

- *Does the SEA intend to analyze the extent of alignment between the State's current content standards and the college- and career-ready standards to determine similarities and differences between those two sets of standards? If so, will the results be used to inform the transition to college- and career-ready standards?*

During the 2011-12 school year educators were provided with an analysis of the similarities and differences between the two sets of standards. Throughout the transition process, Maine DOE focused on the intended instructional changes necessary for full implementation and not on alignment studies. Rather, the Maine DOE staff members directed practitioners to the Rhode Island DOE comparison of NECAP to Common Core. These links are contained within a larger document distributed during Maine DOE trainings that details Maine's strategy of transitioning to the Common Core:

http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/DOCS/CommonCore/CCSS_vs_GLE-GSE_Overview_Document-Mathematics.pdf

http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/DOCS/CommonCore/CCSS_vs_GLE-GSE_Overview_Document-ELA.pdf

- *Does the SEA intend to analyze the linguistic demands of the State's college- and career-ready standards to inform the development of ELP standards corresponding to the college- and career-ready standards and to ensure that English Learners will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to inform revision of the ELP standards and support English Learners in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?*

Maine DOE will understand the linguistic demands of the Common Core standards through its participation in the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium. Staff from the Department have participated in, and benefitted from the work of WIDA to ensure correspondence between the Common Core and ELP standards.

As part of the cross-team collaboration within the DOE, content specialists have made presentations regarding the Common Core to EL professionals, and have learned from ESL professionals what's needed to help English learners meet the Common Core. That Maine DOE staff learning is disseminated to the field through numerous professional development opportunities.

Maine DOE has also created and made available to the field workshops, such as one offered in October this year in Freeport, Maine entitled “The 2012 WIDA English Language Development standards,” a Webinar for EL professionals on “The New Common Core Math Standards and the Next Generation of Science Standards,” taught by DOE content Specialists, and a Summer Academy to be held in Maine in June of 2013 entitled “Working with Common Core State Standards (Common Core) and WIDA English Language Development Standards (ELD). Also, the Title III staff members conduct bi-monthly teleconferences with EL staff to determine needs of the field.

- *Does the SEA intend to analyze the learning and accommodation factors necessary to ensure that students with disabilities will have the opportunity to achieve to the college- and career-ready standards? If so, will the results be used to support students with disabilities in accessing the college- and career-ready standards on the same schedule as all students?*

Maine is involved in a number of initiatives aimed at ensuring that students with disabilities can access and achieve the Common Core standards. Maine's general practitioner PD opportunities are open to teachers of students with disabilities, and specific targeted PD is offered as well, including presentations at conference of the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC), a statewide organization.

Maine is a Tier II Affiliated state in The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC), a consortium of states developing a new alternate assessment tool for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.¹ In addition to developing an assessment, NCSC is developing aligned curriculum, instruction and professional development for teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities. As a Tier II state, Maine will have access to curriculum, instruction and professional development opportunities provided by NCSC, as well as providing beta testing of the assessment instrument.

Maine's professional development efforts for teachers of students with disabilities are enhanced through 2011 Maine's State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). Goal 3 of the Department's grant is to increase the number of Maine special educators who write and implement IEPs so that they are aligned with the Common Core in ELA and math. It is the intent of the Goal 3 Common Core Implementation Team to design and develop a statewide sustainable PD plan that will provide training and technical assistance to all SAUs with regard to serving students with special needs. SPDG Goal 3 Common Core team is doing this work through a pilot project, which is comprised of:

- 4 information gatherings with Maine DOE Common Core personnel and special education personnel.

¹ See <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo/projects/NCSC/NCSC.html> for more information on NCSC.

- 4 Planning meetings with RSU #2 and RSU #15 to develop a statewide sustainable professional development plan for special educators on the development of IEPs in alignment with the Common Core in ELA and math.
- Future monthly meetings with RSU #2, RSU #15, and Westbrook will consist of the development of the statewide sustainable plan, piloting of the plan with the 3 SAUs represented on the Goal 3 Common Core Implementation Team throughout the 2012/13 school year, and the launching of the statewide training to targeted SAUs in the Spring and Fall of 2013. SAUs will be targeted based on general supervision system monitoring visits. Following training of those SAUs, trainings will be open to other SAUs.
- June 2012 attendance by SPDG Director and SPDG Coordinator at the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC) Director's Academy which included:
 - What does standards instruction mean for special education learners and educators? An inside look at modifications made to IEP's and 504 plans when working within a standards-based model was provided along with how accommodations and modifications can be made to help all learners acquire proficiency in each standard will be shared. Additionally, the evolution of intervention and the strategic response to intervention data was discussed.
 - Common Core State Standards for Math and ELA by Maine Dept. of Education, Language Arts and Mathematics Specialist provided an overview of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Math, including focus on the principles that are foundational to the design and implementation of the standards, as well as the timeline for implementation. Information about how the Common Core connect to State level assessment will was highlighted. Web-based tools to assist with implementation of the Common Core were shared.
 - The Standards-Based Individualized Education Program was presented by Sharen Bertrando, and Silvia DeRuvo who are both Special Education Development Program Specialists from WestEd. This training provided an overview of the key elements of a standards-based education aligned to the Common Core Standards for students with disabilities including alignment of instruction to the Common Core Standards, driven by data based decision making on school-wide measures as well as individualized progress monitoring data points and diagnostic assessments. In addition, they addressed Aligning the Common Core Standards to Specially Designed Academic Instruction which focused on the application of Common Core Standards aligned IEP goals in classroom instruction for students of varying degrees of disability and on the instructional process that supports different entry points in which classroom instruction aligned to the goals is designed to meet student needs from the least complex to the most complex tasks including, tasks the embed the standard, classroom tasks that focus on modified standards, classroom tasks that allow for a different response format and tasks that focus on the standard as it is written.

Maine will continue to review and revise, as needed, special education policy and practices in order to more fully support this work. Maine will continue to share evidence-based best practices with regard to special education services. This will help meet Maine's goal that all students with special learning needs have access to efficient, effective and appropriate services that help them succeed.

- *Does the SEA intend to conduct outreach on and dissemination of the college- and career-ready standards? If so, does the SEA's plan reach the appropriate stakeholders, including educators, administrators, families, and IHEs? Is it likely that the plan will result in all stakeholders increasing their awareness of the State's college- and career-ready standards?*

In addition to the webinars and conferences involving educators directly affected by the Common Core, Maine DOE has made long-term efforts to disseminate and explain college and career-ready standards through the work of our Communications Team, through presentations and workshops at conferences and smaller public forums.

Our Commissioner's Update, sent weekly to almost 3,000 subscribers, contains articles and links to information on numerous subjects, including Common Core implementation updates. The updates are often forwarded by LEA administrators to all faculty and staff in each school and are archived on the Maine DOE website.

Furthermore, outreach is provided by content area. For example, during the 2010-2011 school year Maine DOE held various workshops across the state, hosted by districts, regional curriculum groups, and higher education, to inform the field of the new standards and where to find information and support. For example, a webpage for English language arts information was developed and located at: <http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/standards.html>

Maine's higher education community has been aware of, and involved from the beginning in embracing the Common Core standards and Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) initiatives. Early in the process, Maine's public higher education institutions signed MOUs agreeing to participate in the development of assessments and agreeing to adopt policies accepting proficiency in the Common Core, as shown by SBAC assessments, as sufficient to avoid the need for remedial services in their institutions. (See Attachment 5).

Finally, Commissioner Bowen reinvigorated the Education Coordinating Committee, a group consisting of the Commissioner and the Board Chairs and Presidents of the Maine Maritime Academy and each of Maine's higher education systems – the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System.

The ECC met March 13, 2012 and agreed to place college readiness and transition as its top priorities. It formed The College Transitions Working Group (CTWG) which is focused specifically on these issues at the interface of K-12 and higher education. The CTWG report was submitted July 30, 2012 to the Commissioner of Education who is the Chair of the ECC. The report will be used as the formative device to prepare a comprehensive plan for the ECC's endorsement.

- *Does the SEA intend to provide professional development and other supports to prepare teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new standards? If so, will the planned professional development and supports prepare teachers to teach to the new standards, use instructional materials aligned with those standards, and use data on multiple measures of student performance (e.g., data from formative, benchmark, and summative assessments) to inform instruction?*

The Maine Professional Development Model (MPDM) is intended to provide guidance, resources and templates for educators, education agencies, professional organizations (teachers, administrators, school boards), local education agencies (SAUs), higher education, and other providers of professional development in the state of Maine.

Maine DOE's Title II department made grants to support professional development in LEAs during the 2011-2012 school year, funded with Title IIA Improving Teacher Quality State Grants funds and Title IIB Math Science Partnerships Grants . Many of the grant applications specifically focused on teaching to the Common Core. Examples of these include:

Title IIA

- MSAD 6 (Buxton, Maine)
Teacher leaders were trained in Standards-Based Mathematics Curriculum and Methodology, including those necessary to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, as well as data analysis in order to support the ongoing professional development of every mathematics teacher.
- MSAD 23 (Carmel, Maine)
Teachers and administrators conducted research to find grade level assessments that teachers can use on a regular basis. The District hired a consultant to help guide them to find that assessment tool(s), share with staff best practices in math instruction, and review their math curriculum for continuity with the Learning Results and the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
- MSAD 32 (Ashland, Maine) and MSAD 1 (Presque Isle, Maine)
Teachers were afforded the opportunity to attend local, regional and state workshops that were approved by the district and that fit into the district's plan for improving classroom instruction for all students in the content area of math, including implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
- Fayette School Department
Each teacher produced an assessment profile/needs of students using end of the year 2010 assessment data and upcoming 2011 assessment data to analyze specific weaknesses of students' in math. Professional development workshops targeted these specific weaknesses. Math interventions were developed and used with students. Students were made aware of the Common Core State Standards for Math and learning targets in order to set goals and monitor their own learning.

Title IIB.

- Western Maine Mathematics and Science Collaborative, September 2011 to August 2014. Serving 55 teachers and administrators. Includes the following goals: increase middle and high school teachers' and administrators' mathematical content and pedagogical learning, especially as needed to support struggling learners and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics; increase middle and high school science, math, and special education teachers' content knowledge related to math and science within the CTE programs, especially as needed to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and the Next Generation Science Standards; and increase elementary teacher leaders' content and pedagogical knowledge of mathematics, especially as needed to implement the

Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

- Early Mathematical Thinking Enhancement Project, September 2010 to August 2013. Serving 138 teachers and administrators, includes as goals: Expand the work of Early Mathematical Thinking (EMT) formative assessment in K-4 mathematics; B: Increase teacher mathematical content and pedagogical knowledge, especially as needed to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics; and Align the EMT screening items to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.
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- Learn, Experience, Apply in a Regional Network - Mathematics!, September 2010 to August 2013, serving 9 teachers and 300 students; and Midcoast Maine Mentoring Mathematics and Career Technical Education, September 2011 to August, 2014, serving 14 teachers and 450 students. Goals include: continue to refine a model of professional development to improve teachers' content knowledge, content specific pedagogical knowledge and skills, and instructional practices in measurement and approximation, data analysis and statistics, and probability, especially as needed to implement the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics; and improve middle, high, and career technical students' achievement in measurement and approximation, data analysis and statistics and probability, in order to be college and career ready..

❖ **Governor's Academy – past, present, and future**

Maine offers its science and math teachers a robust professional development opportunity, through the Governor's Academy for Science and Mathematics Leadership. Inspired by her participation in West Ed's National Academy for Science and Mathematics Leadership, Page Keeley, Senior Program Director for the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance, developed, found funding for, and implemented the first Governor's Academy for Science and Mathematics Leadership Cohort in 1999. The Governor's Academy is a 2-year long project that provides professional development, with the aim of producing teacher-leaders in the fields of science and mathematics. In 2005 a second cohort group "graduated" from the Academy. These two cohort groups have generated a relatively small but strong and well-informed cadre of science and mathematics leaders in Maine. Many of the Academy fellows lead content area professional development efforts throughout the state and have been recognized for their teaching expertise through recognition in the Presidential Award Program, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification and other national recognition programs. Many of the fellows have stepped into regional and state-level leadership positions.

In June of 2011 Commissioner Bowen attended the graduation of the third cohort of the Governor's Academy for Science and Mathematics Leadership. The graduation of the Third Cohort of Academy fellows added 25 more teacher leaders to Maine. These teacher leaders are well equipped to support mathematics and science education reform in Maine schools. The implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and the anticipated implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), with its strong focus on engineering, make the development and support of leadership in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) more critical than ever.

- *Does the SEEA intend to provide professional development and supports to prepare principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership based on the new standards? If so, will this plan prepare*

principals to do so?

Under the leadership of the Superintendent of Instruction, the Department has greatly expanded professional development offerings for principals and other school leaders. A proposed statewide Leadership Training institute for the summer of 2012 was replaced with smaller, regional leadership training programs for superintendents, district administrators and principals. In addition Maine school based administrators have been and continue to be provided with general content background and transitional timeline information towards the 2014-15 implementation of Common Core assessment. Individual content specialist in ELA and mathematics have provided multiple statewide workshops on content and have established websites providing insights on content expectations. The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium will provide sample assessment items for schools to utilize in 2013-14 and principals will be apprised of these procedures and released items. The DOE staff will continue to assist principals with the implementation of these new expectations.

The Maine Principal's Association also provides statewide training opportunities at annual conference sessions by working with DOE staff and school district practitioners to improve the capacity of building leaders to understand both content depth and the assessment results. Interpreting these results and adjusting instructional practice accordingly is an essential component of principal leadership. Additionally a collaborative between the Maine Development Foundation and the Maine Principals' Association, with the assistance and support of the UNUM Insurance Company and the DOE is providing a year long training experience to Principals and Superintendents on educational leadership to improve student achievement.

The Maine School Superintendent Association also annually invites principals and superintendents to present and learn about transformational practices to embrace the Common Core and improve student achievement.

- *Does the SEA propose to develop and disseminate high-quality instructional materials aligned with the new standards? If so, are the instructional materials designed (or will they be designed) to support the teaching and learning of all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students?*

Maine will take advantage of the availability of high-quality instructional materials produced in national and regional efforts, such as the National Center and State Collaborative and the Council of Chief State School Officers' State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards. The Maine DOE is focusing on working with other states in the creation of high-quality materials and on ensuring that we have the delivery systems to share those materials with local practitioners. For example, the Department is in the process of creating a web-based collaboration platform called the Online Communities of Practice, through which practitioners will share resources, problem-solve and coordinate efforts in implementation of the Common Core, as well as other initiatives.

- *Does the SEA plan to expand access to college-level courses or their prerequisites, dual enrollment courses, or accelerated learning opportunities? If so, will this plan lead to more students having access to courses that prepare them for college and a career?*

One of the major education policy initiatives advanced by Maine governor Paul LePage has been to expand access to early postsecondary learning opportunities for Maine’s high school students and comprehensively address issues of credit transfers from one educational institution to another. Upon taking office, the governor, through Executive Order, created a task force on early post-secondary access, which has met regularly for more than a year and is currently developing a post-secondary access proposal to take to the legislature in the upcoming legislative session. The task force has already issued an interim report containing a series of policy recommendations for school, district and higher education leaders.

The Department has undertaken a series of other actions to provide students with a broad array of courses and educational opportunities designed to help each student achieve college and career-ready standards.

- During the last legislative session, the Department advanced legislation to ensure that all of Maine’s Career and Technical Education centers adopt national career and industry standards, providing more students with the opportunity to graduate with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in industry. This legislation also created a process to streamline the transfer of credits from the state’s CTE centers to its Community College system.
- The state is supporting a handful of pilot programs designed to create college and career pathways for students, including a pilot program involving a high school, a Career and Technical Education center, a Community College and the state’s flagship public university. Students in the pilot will be able to follow a specially designed course pathway providing the opportunity to pursue a number of college and career opportunities.
- Understanding that the rural nature of Maine often makes transportation a barrier to educational opportunities, the state has been actively developing a comprehensive plan to expand access to online and digital learning opportunities. The state already supports a highly-successful program to provide more than a dozen AP courses online to students across Maine, and is developing plans to expand that program and provide a greater variety of online learning options aligned to the Common Core standards. A task force, created by legislation earlier this year, is at work developing a roadmap to expand access to learning opportunities like these.
- The Department is working with Maine’s higher education community in unprecedented ways to better align the state’s secondary and post-secondary institutions. Earlier this year, a commission was created to review how the state’s public postsecondary institutions determine college readiness, with the goal of better coordinating secondary coursework to ensure alignment with college readiness indicators.

The Department is committed to expanding learning opportunities for all of Maine students, to ensure that all students are prepared for college, careers and civic life upon graduation.

- *Does the SEA intend to work with the State’s IHEs and other teacher and principal preparation programs to better prepare—*
 - *incoming teachers to teach all students, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and low-achieving students, to the new college- and career-ready standards; and*

- *incoming principals to provide strong, supportive instructional leadership on teaching to the new standards?*

If so, will the implementation of the plan likely improve the preparation of incoming teachers and principals?

The College Transitions Working Group also focuses on the preparation of teachers and principals. Throughout the course of the waiver, the CTWG will continue to work with teacher education deans and directors, both public and private, to redesign policies, programs and professional development (led by Associate Provost/Ed Dean from University of Maine-Farmington).

The Maine State Board of Education has authority to review and approve educator preparation programs in the State. The Board in 2011 convened a Task Force to recommend revisions to the rule governing approval of educator prep programs (Rule Chapter 114). See <http://www.maine.gov/doe/rule/changes/chapter114/index.html> for an explanation of the rationale and members of the Task Force. Among other changes, the proposed rule adopts InTASC and ISLLC standards for teacher candidate preparation, and continues to stress the need for alignment of teacher preparation with the Maine Learning standards. Unit Standard 2.1.2(e) requires teachers to incorporate “tools of language development into planning and instruction, including strategies for making content accessible to English language learners and for evaluating and supporting their development of English proficiency.

- *Does the SEA plan to evaluate its current assessments and increase the rigor of those assessments and their alignment with the State’s college- and career-ready standards, in order to better prepare students and teachers for the new assessments through one or more of the following strategies:*
 - *Raising the State’s academic achievement standards on its current assessments to ensure that they reflect a level of postsecondary readiness, or are being increased over time to that level of rigor? (E.g., the SEA might compare current achievement standards to a measure of postsecondary readiness by back-mapping from college entrance requirements or remediation rates, analyzing the relationship between proficient scores on the State assessments and the ACT or SAT scores accepted by most of the State’s 4-year public IHEs, or conducting NAEP mapping studies.)*
 - *Augmenting or revising current State assessments by adding questions, removing questions, or varying formats in order to better align those assessments with the State’s college- and career-ready standards?*
 - *Implementing another strategy to increase the rigor of current assessments, such as using the “advanced” performance level on State assessments instead of the “proficient” performance level as the goal for individual student performance or using college-preparatory assessments or other advanced tests on which IHEs grant course credits to entering college students to determine whether students are prepared for postsecondary success?*

If so, is this activity likely to result in an increase in the rigor of the State’s current assessments and their alignment with college- and career-ready standards?

Maine will be *revising current State assessments* to reflect the transition to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts. Maine students in grades 3-8 currently take

the NECAP tests, developed and implemented in collaboration with three other states in New England. Beginning in the Spring of 2015, students will take the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) tests. NECAP testing will continue through the fall of 2012 and 2013, with some adjustments to reflect the transition to the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics.

State department of education staff members from the NECAP states have thoroughly compared the Common Core with the NECAP Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and Grade Span Expectations (GSEs). Following comparison, the staff developed the plan for transition to Smarter Balanced Assessment of the Common Core standards, calling for removal of questions from the 2013 administration of the NECAP mathematics test for grades 3-8.

The transition plan was reviewed by the assessment specialists and content specialists from Maine (and each NECAP state) as well as by the states' assessment contractors and the NECAP Technical Advisory Committee. The transition plan has been posted on the Maine DOE Website at <http://www.maine.gov/education/necap/index.html> and included in numerous PD materials provided to educators – including materials for those who teach Special Education and English Learners. See the transition plan timeline at the end of this section for more details.

- *Does the SEA intend to analyze the factors that need to be addressed in preparing teachers of students with disabilities participating in a State's alternate assessment based on modified academic achievement standards (AA-MAAS) in order to ensure these students can participate in the assessments that will be aligned with college and career-ready standards?*

Maine does not current have an assessment based on modified academic achievement standards. We believe SBAC assessments will provide sufficient accommodations and modifications to allow the majority of students with disabilities to participate in the regular SBAC assessment. The April 2012 description of the development of the SBAC assessments aims to provide the accommodations necessary to enable students who might otherwise take such alternate assessment to take the regular assessment: “The Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines include six documents that are intended to be used by item writers and accessibility experts to make items and tasks accessible to as many students as possible.”²

- *Does the SEA propose other activities in its transition plan? If so, is it likely that these activities will support the transition to and implementation of the State's college- and career-ready standards?*

For a learner-centered educational system of the kind Maine intends to implement to function, all the elements of that system must be carefully aligned to allow learners to move at their own pace and have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Too frequently, however, the various pieces of the educational system are disconnected from one another. Early childhood programs are disconnected from the elementary school programs they feed into. A middle school may embrace a learner-centered model, but the high school its students are to attend does not. Barriers are sometimes erected that prevent students from having access to Career and Technical Education programs, or that complicate the transition from high school to post-secondary educational opportunities.

² p. 18, <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/TaskItemSpecifications/ItemSpecifications/GeneralItemSpecifications.pdf>

Every effort will be made, from the highest levels, to ensure that educational programs are fully aligned and that they all embrace a model of schooling that puts the needs of the learner first. Some of this important work is already underway.

- Recent meetings between the Maine DOE and the state's institutions of public higher education have resulted in an agreement to establish a collaborative working group to focus exclusively on post-secondary transition issues. Specifically, work is underway to ensure collaboration on the definition and indicators of college and career readiness, while our Community College systems is working with our Career and Technical Education centers to ensure a smooth transition to higher education for CTE students.
- At the other end of the age spectrum, while Maine did not win a federal Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant, which was aimed at improving early childhood programming, state officials have moved ahead with as much of the proposed work as possible, including the development of a permanent inter-agency working group devoted to coordinating early childhood policies and practices.
- Last legislative session, legislation was passed to more fully align the state's Career and Technical Education programs with industry-recognized career standards as well as the Common Core standards. These efforts will ensure that students at our CTE centers will receive a rigorous, standards-based education.
- Each of these efforts represents a significant step toward a more fully aligned educational system from early childhood into adulthood.

1.C DEVELOP AND ADMINISTER ANNUAL, STATEWIDE, ALIGNED, HIGH-QUALITY ASSESSMENTS THAT MEASURE STUDENT GROWTH

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide evidence corresponding to the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA is participating in one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition.</p> <p>i. Attach the State's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under that competition. (Attachment 6)</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA is not participating in either one of the two State consortia that received a grant under the Race to the Top Assessment competition, and has not yet developed or administered statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Provide the SEA's plan to develop and administer annually, beginning no later than the 2014-2015 school year, statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs, as well as set academic achievement standards for those assessments.</p>	<p>Option C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The SEA has developed and begun annually administering statewide aligned, high-quality assessments that measure student growth in reading/language arts and in mathematics in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school in all LEAs.</p> <p>i. Attach evidence that the SEA has submitted these assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review or attach a timeline of when the SEA will submit the assessments and academic achievement standards to the Department for peer review. (Attachment 7)</p>
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Maine is a governing member of SBAC. The image below explains the SBAC assessment system:

SMARTER
Balanced Assessment Consortium**A Summary of Core Components**

STATE Maine

STATUS ☒ Governing ☐ Advisory

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is one of two multistate consortia awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop an **assessment system based on the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS)**. To achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, SBAC is committed to ensuring that assessment and instruction embody the CCSS and that all students, regardless of disability, language, or subgroup status, have the opportunity to learn this valued content and show what they know and can do.

With strong support from participating states, institutions of higher education, and industry, SBAC will develop a balanced set of measures and tools, each designed to serve specific purposes. Together, these components will provide student data throughout the academic year that will inform instruction, guide interventions, help target professional development, and ensure an accurate measure of each student's progress toward career and college readiness.

The core components of SBAC are:**Summative assessments:**

- Mandatory comprehensive accountability measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered in the last 12 weeks of the school year in grades 3–8 and high school for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics;
- Designed to provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of students' progress toward and attainment of the knowledge and skills required to be college and career ready;
- Capitalize on the strengths of computer adaptive testing, i.e., efficient and precise measurement across the full range of achievement and quick turnaround of results;
- Produce composite content area scores, based on the computer-adaptive items and performance tasks.

Interim assessments:

- Optional comprehensive and content-cluster measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered at locally determined intervals;
- Designed as item sets that can provide actionable information about student progress;
- Serve as the source for interpretive guides that use publicly released items and tasks;
- Grounded in cognitive development theory about how learning progresses across grades and how college- and career-readiness emerge over time;
- Involve a large teacher role in developing and scoring constructed response items and performance tasks;
- Afford teachers and administrators the flexibility to:
 - select item sets that provide deep, focused measurement of specific content clusters embedded in the CCSS;
 - administer these assessments at strategic points in the instructional year;
 - use results to better understand students' strengths and limitations in relation to the standards;
 - support state-level accountability systems using end-of-course assessments.

System Features

- Ensures coverage of the full range of ELA and mathematics standards and breadth of achievement levels by combining a variety of item types (i.e., selected-response, constructed response, and technology-enhanced) and performance tasks, which require application of knowledge and skills.
- Provides comprehensive, research-based support, technical assistance, and professional development so that teachers can use assessment data to improve teaching and learning in line with the standards.
- Provides online, tailored reports that link to instructional and professional development resources.

Formative tools and processes:

- Provides resources for teachers on how to collect and use information about student success in acquisition of the CCSS;
- Will be used by teachers and students to diagnose a student's learning needs, check for misconceptions, and/or to provide evidence of progress toward learning goals.

The timeline below illustrates the progress toward implementation of SBAC and implementation of proficiency-based demonstration of learning and graduation:

TIMELINE FOR SELECTED MAINE DOESEA AND RELATED INITIATIVES

Area	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Common Core													
NECAP						✓				✓ last test			
MAHSA ELA & Math	✓							✓		✓ last test			
Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium									✓	✓			✓
MAHSA Sci.									✓	✓			✓
Gr 5-8 Sci.									✓	✓			✓
State-Based Diploma									State-based system tools (3/1)	Transition Plan (7/1)			✓ (1/1)
Maine Educator Effectiveness Council		MEEC convenes					Rec to Ed Committee (1/1)			SAUs develop and adopt locally-determined evaluation and support systems consistent with state guidelines and submit to DOE for approval (2013-14)	SAUs pilot locally-determined evaluation and support systems as needed (2014-15)	Full implementation of locally-determined evaluation and support systems (2015-16)	
ESEA Flexibility		Workgroups convene			App. Due (9/6)					Projected implementation school year for requested differentiated recognition, accountability, and support (2013-14)			

PRINCIPLE 2: STATE-DEVELOPED DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

2.A DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STATE-BASED SYSTEM OF DIFFERENTIATED RECOGNITION, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND SUPPORT

- 2.A.i Provide a description of the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system that includes all the components listed in Principle 2, the SEA’s plan for implementation of the differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system no later than the 2013–2014 school year, and an explanation of how the SEA’s differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system is designed to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

As stated at the beginning of this application, Maine’s ESEA request is based on five pillars: accountability, assessment, growth, support and educator effectiveness.

With regard to accountability, Maine proposes to set ambitious yet achievable performance targets for every school and to publicly report both achievement of those targets and growth toward meeting those targets. To be discussed in much more detail throughout this section that addresses Principle 2, in place of the current NCLB model for school and district accountability, Maine proposes to build a school-based accountability system built on multiple measures that assess academic growth as well as attainment of learning outcomes.

A critical element in this system is the School Accountability Index (scale: 0 – 100), which will represent a more comprehensive and meaningful way of determining overall school performance and will contain the following variables for every school regardless of their Title I status:

1. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding grade level standards in reading and math relative to each school’s six-year proficiency target
 - Student proficiency will be measured by NECAP for grades 3-8 and MHSA for grade 11
2. Year-to-year progress
 - Progress will be measured by an increase in the percentage of students in the school meeting or exceeding grade level expectations from one year to the next relative to the school’s expected growth trajectory in reading and math, again measured by NECAP for grades 3-8 and MHSA for grade 11
3. Student Percentile Growth for applicable students and grade levels
 - Growth will be measured in grades 4-8 math and reading measured by NECAP following the commonly used Colorado model now calculated and made available through the State Longitudinal Data System (http://dw.education.maine.gov/DirectoryManager/Web/Maine_report/MaineLanding.aspx)
4. 5-year cohort graduation rate for any school that has a 12th grade

- The selection of this particular measure is extremely important to Mainers. Well over 1,500 individuals responding to a series of questions in a comprehensive survey (see Attachment 2b). Of all the suggested measures, high school graduation received the highest support for inclusion as part of a more comprehensive identification process. In addition, the AMO Workgroup – comprised of educators from across the state – determined early on that using a 5-year rate would be a more meaningful and accurate measure for this purpose. The DOE’s strategic plan emphasizes student-centered learning, whose primary principle is promoting learning as the constant and time as the variable. Because so many high schools continue to serve and support students who are unable to graduate in four years, the Workgroup’s decision to include the 5-year rate demonstrates an acknowledgement of LEAs’ commitment to attaining college and career-readiness for all of its students. During the public and online forums hosted by the Commissioner during the month of August, this determination was frequently highlighted by participants as one of the strong points of the proposed ESEA Flexibility request.

Under the ESEA Flexibility, Maine will identify, recognize, and support schools in a differentiated system that acknowledges their past performance, holds them accountable for growth, and provides customized support and interventions tailored to their unique needs. Maine is establishing the goal of improving the proficiency of all students in the required tested years (grades 3 through 8 and grade 11) in both reading and mathematics. Maine is committed to reducing the number of students *not* proficient by half over the next six years or by the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

It is important to note that the requirements of the accountability system described here apply only to schools who receive federal Title I program funds. Nevertheless, in an effort to ensure schools and communities have the most meaningful information, Maine will continue to publish school- and district-based report cards indicating how well their students are performing and progressing on important outcome measures such as proficiency, graduation, participation, and attendance rates for all students, and for each subgroup for which there are at least 10 students.

As described in the Consultation section, during the past 12 months, Maine has engaged in a statewide discussion in order to establish a system for meaningfully measuring student and school growth. Through these discussions, core principles of Maine’s plan for a differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system were established. These principles include:

1. Establish rigorous learning standards and expectations in reading and mathematics – discussed in Principle 1
2. Identify and provide targeted and specialized support for Maine’s lowest performing schools (priority)
3. Identify and provide targeted and specialized support for Maine schools with the greatest within-school achievement gap (focus)
4. Reward the schools with the very best achievement levels and those with significant year-to-year improvements
5. Provide schools and districts with specific public report cards with ambitious targets that require every school and district ensure to improve at every grade level for every student subgroup.

6. Ensure that every Maine school benefits from the instructional practices, organizational design, leadership approaches, and successful parent and community partnerships in place
7. Develop a system of statewide and regional supports, including vibrant networks that nurture and grow the capacity for educational excellence envisioned for the state of Maine. These networks and supports will be made available to all schools, regardless of their Title I status and their performance

With these principles established, Maine’s Department of Education and its stakeholders then set two overarching goals for the state:

1. Maine’s High School graduation rate will be 90% by 2016
2. The percentage of Maine students not meeting learning expectations will decrease by at least half by the 2018-19 school year (in six years)

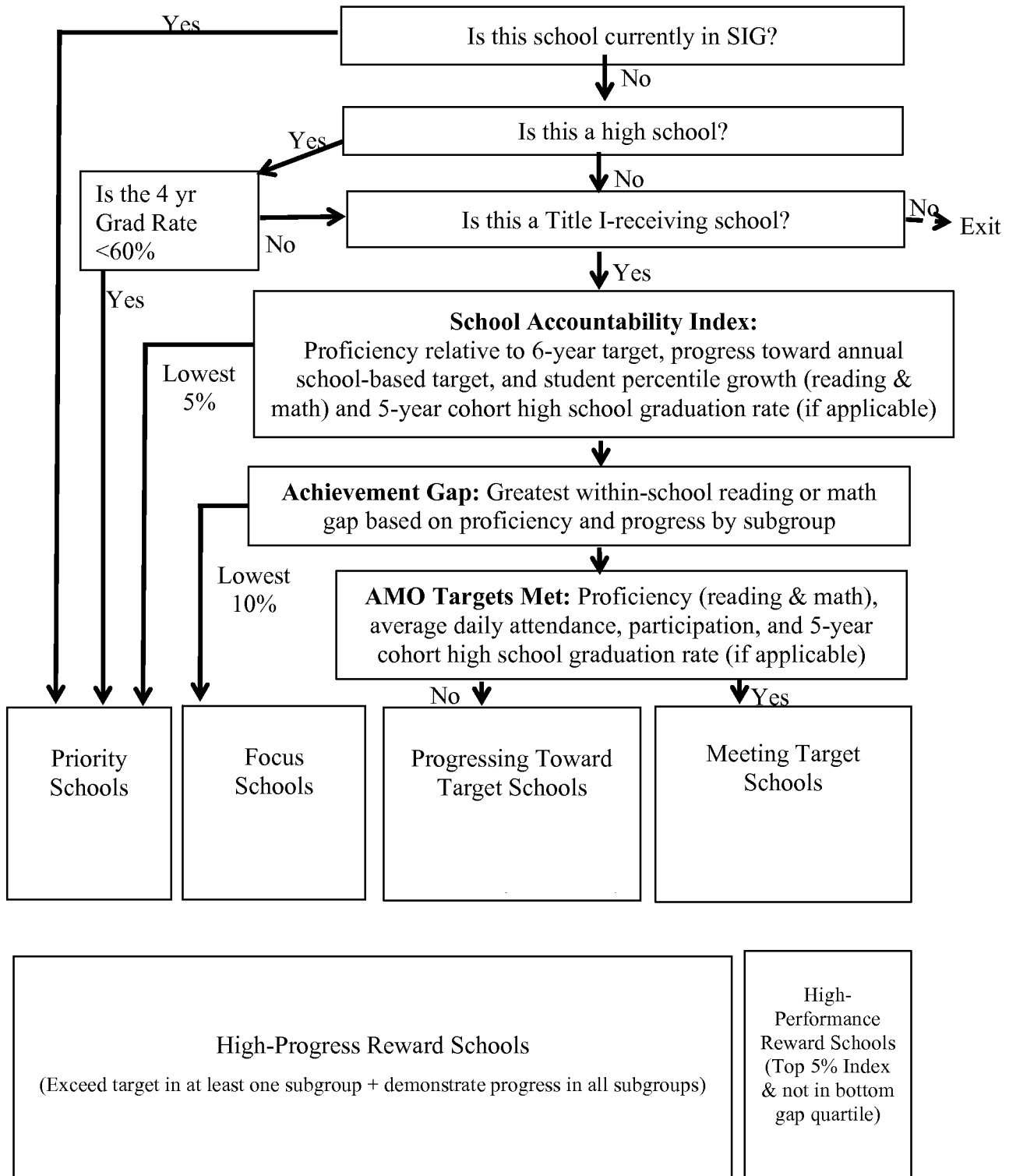
There will be four categories of schools in Maine’s differentiated, recognition, accountability, and support system:

1. **Priority Schools**
 - lowest 5% overall School Accountability Index
 - This is an estimated 19 schools (in 2011-2012, there were 382 schools receiving Title I funds) and includes all 3 SIG schools from the 2010-2011 school year that will have one year remaining on their three year plan
2. **Focus Schools**
 - 10% of Title I schools with greatest within-school achievement gaps calculated using a Within-School Achievement Gap Index. This is an estimated 39 schools
 - The n-size will decrease from 20 (historically used in the NCLB system) to 10 for eligible sub-groups
3. **Progressing Toward Target Schools**
 - remaining Title I schools not meeting all of their annual achievement growth targets
4. **Meeting Target Schools**
 - remaining Title I school meeting all of their annual growth targets

Maine will also recognize **Reward Schools**. These schools will be differentiated in two ways:

1. **High-Performance Schools**
 - a. Top 5% of schools on the overall School Accountability Index score and **not** in the bottom quartile (25%) of schools on the within-school gap measurement
2. **High-Progress Schools**
 - a. Schools meeting or exceeding at least one of their annual targets while also making progress on all other targets and **not** in the bottom quartile (25%) of schools on the within-school gap measurement. Schools in any of the four accountability groups are eligible for recognition in the High Progress group

The following diagram summarizes the determination process and differentiated identification of schools in the system proposed by Maine under the auspices of the ESEA Flexibility opportunity.



Furthermore, the School Accountability Index will be used by the state to provide schools and districts with specific public report cards. The report cards will have ambitious targets that require every school and district to improve at every grade level for every student subgroup. Report cards will have two sections:

1. Section 1 – Progress toward school & district based AMO targets
 - Achievement, attendance, participation, and graduation –whole school and all eligible subgroups.
 - This will be calculated for all schools (regardless of Title I status)
2. Section 2 – ESEA Accountability AMOs
 - School and District Accountability Index;
 - Within-School Achievement Gap for all eligible subgroups.
 - Designation of status for Title I receiving schools only.

In order for the state to understand the needs of its high-need schools, schools will conduct a comprehensive self-assessment. The self-assessment instrument will be aligned with the seven ESEA Turnaround Principles by:

1. providing strong leadership by: (1) reviewing the performance of the current principal; (2) either replacing the principal if such a change is necessary to ensure strong and effective leadership, or demonstrating to the SEA that the current principal has a track record in improving achievement and has the ability to lead the turnaround effort; and (3) providing the principal with operational flexibility in the areas of scheduling, staff, curriculum, and budget;
2. ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by: (1) reviewing the quality of all staff and retaining only those who are determined to be effective and have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort; (2) preventing ineffective teachers from transferring to these schools; and (3) providing job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support systems and tied to teacher and student needs;
3. redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;
4. strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards;
5. using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data;
6. establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addressing other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, and health needs; and
7. providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.

Currently, a number of Maine educators use the New England Secondary School Consortium *Global Best Practices Toolkit* (Appendix 3), where alignment to the ESEA turnaround principles will be identified. Other instruments could also be used as long as they demonstrate strong alignment with the turnaround principles, including:

- The self-assessment needs to be thorough and involve all faculty
- The DOE School Improvement Specialist will provide direct support and facilitation to the school regarding the self-assessment

- Once the self-assessment is complete, the school will then construct a comprehensive 2-year school improvement plan addressing:
 - The results of the self-assessment
 - The 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles
 - Strategies that will lead to improved student learning and growth
- The plan will be supported by a bank of promising strategies aligned with the turnaround principles drawn both by research and from best practices found in Maine schools who have successfully demonstrated progress under the current accountability system. This bank of promising and effective strategies will be made available to all schools in the state, regardless of their accountability status and their Title I designation.
- The Plan must be developed collaboratively by a representative group of stakeholders
- The plan will be submitted to the Maine DOE for review and approval. Maine DOE will use a plan review rubric aligned with the 7 turnaround principles
- Upon approval by the Maine DOE ESEA team, the available funds will be distributed to the school
- Direct support will be provided by the Maine DOE via the assigned School Improvement Specialist

Providing interventions and supports

Maine is deeply committed to ensuring its schools ongoing improvement efforts are well-informed and supported. To that end, a myriad of activities and resources will be made available not only to focus and priority schools, but to all public schools regardless of their Title I status. These are summarized in the following table:

Intervention & Support	Description, rationale, outcomes
Self-Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to engage in honest reflection, collaborative reflection that specifically analyzes root cause and informs areas that need highest level of intervention. This will provide baseline data for development of improvement plan.
Improvement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline annual goals, based on measurable objectives, using research-based indicators/high-leverage strategies aligned with root cause and hoped-for outcomes • Contains clear and explicit timelines • Informs ongoing reflection by providing benchmarks and progress toward target and leads to a continuous cycle of planning, implementing, reviewing
Alignment with 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned, the self-assessment and proposed strategies in focus schools must be aligned with the 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles. The DOE School Improvement Specialist assigned to each focus school will support and ensure this alignment.
Targeted Title I accountability / ESEA directed funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I (1003(A)) school improvement funds will be used to support priority and focus schools

Intervention & Support	Description, rationale, outcomes
<p>Required 20% set-aside of Title I district allocation (applies only to schools not exiting status in 2 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority and focus schools not demonstrating progress during their first two years - and therefore not exiting their accountability status designation - will need to direct additional funds to support/implement higher levels of intervention beyond the capacity of 1003(a) funds
<p>Convert to Schoolwide Title I status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority schools that do not have schoolwide Title I status will be required to change their designation so that Title I-funded services will be made available to all students. This will allow greater flexibility of use of district Title I allocation to the school and provide greater levels of resources to support school-based interventions, supports, and school improvement activities
<p>School-based improvement team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School improvement must be a collaborative process and include all stakeholders in the school (administrators, teachers, parents, etc.). This strategy also clearly aligns with the 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles and is based on research/best practices
<p>DOE Title I School Improvement Consultants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides facilitation of planning process • Serves as school improvement coach providing guidance and support (technical assistance) • Serves as an external critical friend to the process • Provides monitoring from SEA level • Serves as a conduit of information between the SEA and LEA
<p>Specialized DOE support (e.g. Response to Intervention, Students With Disabilities, English Language Learners, Content Areas and other Student Services such as truant, dropouts, homeless, migrant students)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DOE's team of professionals who are responsible for organizing and providing specialized support to LEAs will be – in part - directed to serve schools identified in the new accountability system • Their work will be coordinated by the Chief Academic Officer and by the Title I School Improvement Office • This work will coordinate the sharing of resources and information and where and when appropriate, possibly provide training between the work of specialists within the SEA targeted to schools in the Title I system • This will also continue to focus on ongoing work inside the DOE to refocus and refine responsibilities of DOE personnel guided by the Strategic Plan

Intervention & Support	Description, rationale, outcomes
Affinity / Special Issue Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These networks – or Professional Learning Groups – will provide opportunities for schools with issues in common to share best practices and engage in collaborative support work to address similar challenges and dilemmas • Provides a way to focus and harness specialized resources and supports for most critical needs • Results in more efficient use of resources • When appropriate, these networks will meet and continue to collaborate using online means of communication
Regional Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together schools in a region, again for efficiency • Honors unique differences across Maine’s very large geographic area • Fosters school to school relationships leading to the establishment of authentic and powerful Professional Learning Groups or Networks • DOE will facilitate a connection with already existing regional support organizations that serve schools in a particular region with established track record of successful support (e.g. Western Maine Educational Collaborative, CACE: Central Aroostook Council on Education; DEEP: Down East Education Partnership; etc.)
Transformational Leaders Network (Regional and grade level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This existing network – bringing together school principals and building-based leaders – will grow and continue to assist in the planning and implementation of school improvement plans .
Quarterly/Continuous progress reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will allow DOE to follow progress more closely and support mid-course corrections when needed • Leads to monitoring and supporting of the implementation of the school improvement plan • Prompts ongoing reflection in the school improvement cycle
Annual reporting (summative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-end comprehensive report illustrating progress of student learning and growth • Includes year-end budget report • Prompts reflection (lessons learned and implications for subsequent planning) • Provides evidence of implementation

Intervention & Support Description, rationale, outcomes

- Based on common need as gathered from school performance data, and/or feedback from school improvement consultants, from the schools and analysis of schools’ self-assessment
 - Provides economy of scale for professional development
 - In the past, the DOE has offered single and multi-day training around math, data-driven decision-making, formative assessments. The list of topics and issues addressed will expand to include ongoing support for Common Core implementation.
 - Available to all schools. Resources are preliminary vetted by the DOE and general process for guiding the selection and implementation of tools. Schools can choose from a variety of tools (e.g. there could be several assessment and action planning tools to choose from)
 - University faculty and researchers as part of a board of advisors to DOE school improvement division along with representatives from Reward schools to provide review and consideration guidance around tools and resources
 - This easy-to-use online calculator will allow schools to develop their 6-year AMO targets, expected annual targets for each grade level and subgroup for reaching and math, and HS graduation rate. It will also provides real-time data analysis providing schools with an indication of where they are on each index.
- DOE-sponsored school improvement events**
- DOE web-based improvement resources for best practices (instruction, leadership, community engagement)**
- Online AMO, SAI, and Within-School Gap Index calculator**

Each newly identified or continuing Title I Continuous Improvement Priority Schools (CIPS) not categorized as a Priority or Focus school will be reviewed to determine where they should be in the new system. If any fall into the category of “progressing toward standard” the interventions and supports may include:

- Partial time with a Maine DOE consultant
- Funds to support their improvement efforts, depending on level of need and availability
- All available I & S resources in the above table

Table 1. Interventions and supports by accountability designation

	Priority	Focus	Progressing	CIPS	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Self-Assessment	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Improvement Plan	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Alignment with 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available

	Priority	Focus	Progressing	CIPS	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Targeted Title I accountability / ESEA directed funds	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Convert to Schoolwide Title I status	✓	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available	N/A
School-based improvement team	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
DOE Specialist Assigned	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Affinity / Special Issue Networks	✓	✓	Available (if applicable)	✓	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)
Regional Networks	✓	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)
Specialized DOE support (RTI, Content, etc.)	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Transformational Leaders Network	✓	✓	Available (if applicable)	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Quarterly progress reports	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Annual reporting	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
DOE-sponsored school improvement events	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
User-friendly Maine DOE web-based improvement resources for best practices (instruction, leadership, community engagement)	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Online AMO, SAI, and Gap Index calculator	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available

The theory of action with providing these interventions and supports is that schools will improve when all stakeholders are involved in a comprehensive, collaborative, long-term process that is informed by a research-based framework that begins by analyzing root cause and directs strategies and resources where they are needed most. In order to understand whether or not the interventions and supports are working, priority and focus schools will implement their comprehensive school plan and be supported by the Maine DOE for at least two years. They must demonstrate progress toward their learning targets for 2 consecutive years. After priority and focus schools demonstrate progress toward their targets for 2 consecutive years, they will continue to receive limited support and monitoring by Maine DOE for one more year. If schools demonstrate continued growth in 3rd year without additional funds, they will exit their status, though will be able to avail themselves of Maine DOE support if they choose.

Schools that do not demonstrate growth during the first two years of targeted support as either priority or focus will experience an expanded set of interventions and supports. These include:

- A Maine DOE/External review team that will conduct school assessment using an instrument that is aligned with the 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles
- The Maine DOE team will support and approve the construction of an updated school improvement plan informed by the external review
- Focus schools not demonstrating progress during the first two years must address all 7 Turnaround Principles
- All priority and focus schools not demonstrating progress during the first two years must also set-aside 20% of its district Title I allocation to support the school improvement plan
- If there still is no improvement from year 3 to year 4, then the school must identify – with the support and guidance of the DOE - at least one certified specialist - whose primary responsibility will be to provide ongoing classroom-based professional development and support around the implementation of best practices for instruction. The area of expertise of this classroom-based professional and their work in the school must directly align with the identified needs that result from the externally conducted school assessment.

2.A.ii *Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding information, if any.*

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The SEA includes student achievement only on reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system and to identify reward, priority, and focus schools.</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA includes student achievement on assessments in addition to reading/language arts and mathematics in its differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system or to identify reward, priority, and focus schools, it must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. provide the percentage of students in the “all students” group that performed at the proficient level on the State’s most recent administration of each assessment for all grades assessed; and b. include an explanation of how the included assessments will be weighted in a manner that will result in holding schools accountable for ensuring all students achieve college- and career-ready standards.
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2.B SET AMBITIOUS BUT ACHIEVABLE ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Select the method the SEA will use to set new ambitious but achievable annual measurable objectives (AMOs) in at least reading/language arts and mathematics for the State and all LEAs, schools, and subgroups that provide meaningful goals and are used to guide support and improvement efforts. If the SEA sets AMOs that differ by LEA, school, or subgroup, the AMOs for LEAs, schools, or subgroups that are further behind must require greater rates of annual progress.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs in annual equal increments toward a goal of reducing by half the percentage of students in the “all students” group and in each subgroup who are not proficient within six years. The SEA must use current proficiency rates based on assessments administered in the 2011–</p>	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Set AMOs that increase in annual equal increments and result in 100 percent of students achieving proficiency no later than the end of the 2019–2020 school year. The SEA must use the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011–2012 school year</p>	<p>Option C</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Use another method that is educationally sound and results in ambitious but achievable AMOs for all LEAs, schools, and subgroups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.
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2012 school year as the starting point for setting its AMOs. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.	as the starting point for setting its AMOs. i. Provide the new AMOs and an explanation of the method used to set these AMOs.	ii. Provide an educationally sound rationale for the pattern of academic progress reflected in the new AMOs in the text box below. iii. Provide a link to the State's report card or attach a copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011-2012 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the "all students" group and all subgroups. (Attachment 8)
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Six-year Proficiency Targets

Maine will establish proficiency targets in math and reading in a manner that cuts in half, by 2018-19, the percentage of students who are not proficient in reading or math. Targets will be specific to each school, each grade level, each subject and each subgroup within a school.

Example:

(Imaginary) Pineville Middle School's Grade 8 proficiency rates in the 2012-13 school year are as follows:

	Math	Reading
Caucasian/White	52	60
African American/Black	<i>Fewer than 10 students</i>	
Hispanic	<i>Fewer than 10 students</i>	
Asian or Pacific Islander	<i>Fewer than 10 students</i>	
American Indian/Native Alaskan	<i>Fewer than 10 students</i>	
Economically Disadvantaged	48	48
Students with Disabilities	38	50
Limited English Proficient	<i>Fewer than 10 students</i>	

A proficiency target for school year 2018-19 will be established for Pineville Middle School, for each subject and each grade that's assessed, and for each sub-group within that grade.

An example of the calculation, for one grade and one subject, is shown below:

Pineville Middle School, 8th grade, for math, for the school year 2018-19:

Caucasian/White

% of non-proficient students = 100% - 52% proficient = 48% not proficient

Reduce non-proficiency by 50% = 24 (50% of 48)

Proficiency Target = 24% + 52% = 76%

Economically Disadvantaged

% of non-proficient students = 100% - 48% proficient = 52% not proficient

Reduce non-proficiency by 50% = 26 (50% of 52)

Proficiency Target = 26% + 48% = 74%

Students with Disabilities

% of non-proficient students = 100% - 38 = 62%

Reduce non-proficiency by 50% = 31 (50% of 62)

Proficiency Target = 31% + 38% = 69%

Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) Targets

The annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for Pineville Middle School will be determined by dividing into 6 equal increments the percentage number needed to reach the proficiency target over 6 years. An AMO will be determined for each school, for each grade, each tested subject and each student sub-group.

Example:

Pineville Middle School, 8th grade, Math

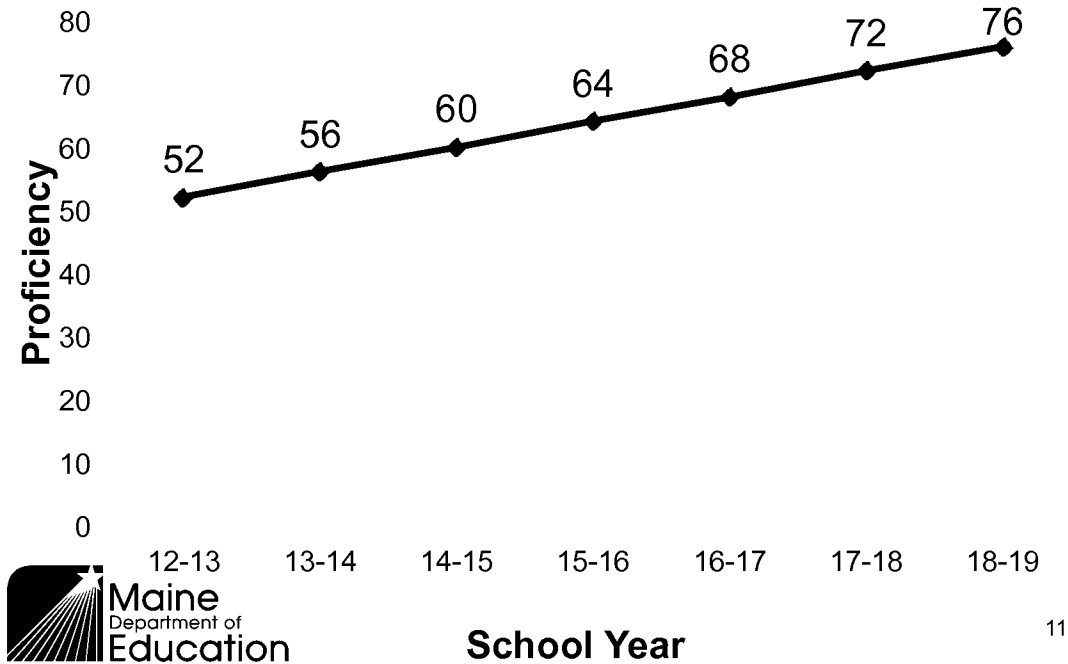
Caucasian/White

To reduce the non-proficiency rate by 50%, Pineville must increase the proficiency rate by 24 points

24 points/6 years = 4 points/year

The proficiency rate for this subgroup, for this grade, must increase by 4 points each year, beginning in school year 2013-14.

Pineville 8th grade math AMO for Caucasian/White students



2.C REWARD SCHOOLS

2.C.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying highest-performing and high-progress schools as reward schools . If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of reward schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

A new feature of Maine’s Title I accountability system is the addition of two separate categories of reward schools. Maine will recognize the top 5% of Title I schools in the SAI who also have met each of their annual learning targets and have no significant within-school gaps (i.e. whose gap score is not among the highest 25%). These will be known as **high performance** reward schools.

In addition, Maine will also recognize any Title I school which has exceeded its annual learning target in at least one category (math and reading proficiency for whole school and any eligible subgroup) and which has made progress on all other applicable learning measures assessed for every subgroup, including the 5-year high school cohort graduation rate. These schools will be known as

high progress schools. High progress school status can be granted to any Title I school, including schools designated as priority or focus.

2.C.ii Provide the SEA’s list of reward schools in Table 2.

2.C.iii Describe how the SEA will publicly recognize and, if possible, reward highest-performing and high-progress schools.

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Maine has many high performing schools resulting from a myriad of innovative, best practices implemented across the state. In some instances these translate to consistent high performance among students and in other cases it is evidenced by impressive annual growth in student achievement and attainment. Maine’s high progress and high performance reward schools will be recognized in a variety of ways. Maine DOE will:

1. Announce its annual list of reward schools in a press conference and prominently display this list on its website;
2. Profile reward schools written and featured during the weekly Commissioner’s Update email and blog post;
3. Send every reward school a special electronic seal that it can use to display on its website and stationary;
4. Invite educators from reward schools to share their successful school improvement work with colleagues during some of the state and regional DOE-sponsored events and conferences; and
5. Create a group of advisors from the group of reward schools that will meet periodically during the year to help inform and provide feedback to the DOE’s Chief Academic Officer, a senior position newly created to oversee the state’s school improvement and accountability efforts.

2.D PRIORITY SCHOOLS

2.D.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of lowest-performing schools equal to at least five percent of the State’s Title I schools as priority schools. If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of priority schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

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Maine’s Title I receiving schools with the 5% lowest SAI scores will comprise the group of schools receiving the most comprehensive and intensive supports and will be designated as priority schools. Maine DOE will identify at least 5% of its Title I schools in this category. As there are approximately 380 Maine schools receiving Title I funds, this means that the schools representing the 19 lowest SAI scores will receive this priority school determination.

The following describe the ‘business rules’ used to calculate the School Accountability Index for each school, depending on the grade levels served.

School Accountability Index – Secondary Schools

Absolute Performance (School Target)	
Math - % at or above proficient At or above target = 20 points % of target X 20 (maximum of 20 points)	Reading - % at or above proficient At or above target = 20 points % of target X 20 (maximum of 20 points)
Progress (School Target)	
Math – Progress to % at or above proficient target (2018 Target - 2011 baseline) ÷ 2 = Goal Goal ÷ 6 = Incremental annual increase goal (Actual ÷ Annual goal) X 20 (maximum 20 points)	Reading – Progress to % at or above proficient target (2018 Target - 2011 baseline) ÷ 2 = Goal Goal ÷ 6 = Incremental annual increase goal (Actual ÷ Annual goal) X 20 (maximum 20 points)
Graduation (State Target)	
Goal 90% by 2017 (Actual 5-yr Graduation Rate ÷ Goal) X 20 (maximum 20 points)	
School Accountability Index (SAI)	
Maximum 100 SAI points	20 points -Absolute Performance Math 20 points -Absolute Performance Reading 20 points -Progress Math 20 points –Progress Reading 20 points –Graduation

School Accountability Index – K-8 Schools

Absolute Performance (School Target)	
Math - % at or above proficient At or above target = 20 points % of target X 20 (maximum of 20 points)	Reading - % at or above proficient At or above target = 20 points % of target X 20 (maximum of 20 points)
Progress (School Target)	
Math – Progress to % at or above proficient target (2018 Target - 2011 baseline) ÷ 2 = Goal Goal ÷ 6 = Incremental annual increase goal (Actual ÷ Annual goal) X 20 (maximum 20 points)	Reading – Progress to % at or above proficient target (2018 Target - 2011 baseline) ÷ 2 = Goal Goal ÷ 6 = Incremental annual increase goal (Actual ÷ Annual goal) X 20 (maximum 20 points)
Growth (State Target)	
Math –Student Growth Percentile Model $<35 = 4$ points $\geq 35 < 45 = 8$ points $\geq 45 < 55 = 12$ points $\geq 55 < 65 = 16$ points $\geq 65 = 20$ points	Reading –Student Growth Percentile Model $<35 = 4$ points $\geq 35 < 45 = 8$ points $\geq 45 < 55 = 12$ points $\geq 55 < 65 = 16$ points $\geq 65 = 20$ points
School Accountability Index (SAI)	
Maximum 100 SAI points SAI = Total points ÷ 120 X 100 (Example: $105 \div 120 = .875 \times 100 = 87.5$ points)	20 points -Absolute Performance Math 20 points -Absolute Performance Reading 20 points - Progress Math 20 points –Progress Reading 20 points –Growth Math 20 Points Growth Reading

Priority schools will be required to conduct a comprehensive school self-assessment supported and facilitated by a Maine DOE school improvement specialist. The results of this thoughtful and collaborative process will be used to inform the development of a multi-year school improvement plan – which will be signed by the principal, superintendent, and school board chair - that must propose implementing research-based best practices that align with the seven ESEA Turnaround principles determined by the U.S. Department of Education representing the following categories: ensuring both (1) strong leadership and (2) effective teaching are in place, (3) redesigning the school day, (4) strengthening instruction, (5) using data, (6) improving the school environment, and (7) engaging families and the community. A more complete list of the proposed required and optional interventions and supports for Maine schools appears at the end of this section (this list of activities was described in detail in Section 2.A.i). Priority schools will receive additional funding, engage in continuous school improvement and will be monitored and supported by the DOE for at least two years and will be required to demonstrate progress toward their school learning targets. A complete list and description of the supports and intervention activities required of all priority schools, see pages 48-52.

It's important to note that any Title I eligible or receiving high school with a four-year cohort graduation rate less than 60% must – under federal guidelines – be designated as a priority school. In

addition, any school remaining in the federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) program will be considered a priority school. These are requirements for USDE approval of any state waiver request. (See above Section 2.B for business rules (definitions and formula)). In addition, Maine DOE will run the formula again in year 2. Any new school in year 2 with an index falling in the bottom 5% on year 1 numbers will be added.

Maine DOE will identify schools with the greatest achievement gaps by examining the greatest within school difference in achievement among all eligible subgroups using a schoolwide achievement gap index for both reading and mathematics. Additionally, any Title I eligible high school with a graduation rate below 60% will automatically be identified as a priority school, regardless of the overall achievement of its students or its within-school achievement gaps.

The tables below illustrate how the targets will be calculated. It is important to note that the data to be used is lagging data. To simulate the AMO calculations that is shown in Table 2, 2011-12 data is used for elementary schools. The data for high schools is from the 2010-11 school year, along with the 5-year graduation rate for the Class of 2010.³

Since Maine already identified its accountability schools for the 2012-13 school year, Table 2, provided at the end of Principle 2, identifies the Reward, Priority, and Focus schools using the methods that will be used during the 2013-14 school year to test its model. The analysis will be conducted again at the end of June 2013 as soon as all of the available accountability scores are provided by the assessment vendors.

2.D.ii Provide the SEA's list of priority schools in Table 2.

The list of priority schools is provided in Attachment 9.

2.D.iii Describe the meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles that an LEA with priority schools will implement.

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A Maine DOE School Improvement Specialist will be assigned to each priority school to provide guidance and support. Once the Specialist is assigned, the school leadership will conduct an overall school needs assessment aligned with the ESEA Turnaround Principles (facilitated and supported by DOE School Improvement Specialist). Based on the results of the self-assessment and on student achievement and attainment data, the school leadership team and the Specialist will construct a 2-year school improvement plan and demonstrate how it is aligned with the ESEA Turnaround Principles.

Once the plan is approved by the Maine ESEA team, funds will be released to the school and implementation will occur. Implementation support and guidance will be provided by a DOE School Improvement Specialist who is a member of the DOE Accountability and Improvement

³ The lagging data issue was clarified and approved during a phone discussion with Emily Mayer and the USED ESEA flexibility team on August 15, 2012.

Team which reports directly to the State’s Chief Academic Officer, a new position created within the DOE.

As discussed in Principle 2.A, a myriad of activities and resources will be made available to priority schools. The priority school activities and services are shown in the following table, highlighted in grey:

	Priority	Focus	Progressing	CIPS	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Self-Assessment	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Improvement Plan	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Alignment with 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Targeted Title I accountability / ESEA directed funds	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Convert to Schoolwide Title I status	✓	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available	N/A
School-based improvement team	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
DOE Specialist Assigned	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Affinity / Special Issue Networks	✓	✓	Available (if applicable)	✓	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)
Regional Networks	✓	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)
Specialized DOE support (RTI, Content, etc.)	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Transformational Leaders Network	✓	✓	Available (if applicable)	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Quarterly progress reports	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Annual reporting	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
DOE-sponsored school improvement events	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available

	Priority	Focus	Progressing	CIPS	Meeting	Title I	All Public
User-friendly Maine DOE web-based improvement resources for best practices (instruction, leadership, community engagement)	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Online AMO, SAI, and Gap Index calculator	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available

2.D.iv Provide the timeline the SEA will use to ensure that its LEAs that have one or more priority schools implement meaningful interventions aligned with the turnaround principles in each priority school no later than the 2014–2015 school year and provide a justification for the SEA’s choice of timeline.

.....

Maine DOE’s team identified that two years would be the length of time to identify meaningful interventions, and implement interventions. Schools that do not demonstrate growth during the first two years of targeted support as either priority or focus schools will experience an expanded set of interventions and supports. These include:

- A Maine DOE/External review team that will conduct school assessment using an instrument that is aligned with the 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles
- The Maine DOE team will support and approve the construction of an updated school improvement plan informed by the external review
- Focus schools not demonstrating progress during the first two years must address all 7 Turnaround Principles
- All priority and focus schools not demonstrating progress during the first two years must also set-aside 20% of its district Title I allocation to support the school improvement plan
- If there still is no improvement from year 3 to year 4, then the school must identify – with the support and guidance of the DOE - at least one certified specialist - whose primary responsibility will be to provide ongoing classroom-based professional development and support around the implementation of best practices for instruction. The area of expertise of this classroom-based professional and their work in the school must directly align with the identified needs that result from the externally conducted school assessment.

2.D.v Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement exits priority status and a justification for the criteria selected.

.....

In order to exit, the school must demonstrate progress on every variable for which there is an annual target. This progress must move the school on the School Accountability Index so that the school is not in the lowest 5% of schools in Maine. Maine DOE anticipates that the priority schools will be on a school improvement plan for at least two years to ensure that growth is sustained. Although a school can exit priority status, there will be an opportunity to continue receiving support from the Maine DOE Team upon exit. Once schools officially exit their designated accountability status, a new set of priority schools will be identified following the Business Rules described above such that at least 5% of Maine’s Title I schools will be identified as such.

2.E FOCUS SCHOOLS

2.E.i Describe the SEA’s methodology for identifying a number of low-performing schools equal to at least 10 percent of the State’s Title I schools as “focus schools.” If the SEA’s methodology is not based on the definition of focus schools in *ESEA Flexibility* (but instead, e.g., based on school grades or ratings that take into account a number of factors), the SEA should also demonstrate that the list provided in Table 2 is consistent with the definition, per the Department’s “Demonstrating that an SEA’s Lists of Schools meet ESEA Flexibility Definitions” guidance.

.....

Maine’s Title I receiving schools that are the lowest 10% of Title I schools with greatest within-school achievement gaps. This is an estimated 39 schools to be designated as **focus** schools. In order to provide a far more meaningful measure and place an even more critical emphasis on achievement gaps, the n-size has been decreased from 20 to 10 and the analysis will be done at the school – rather than grade – level. This will result in a more meaningful measure given the small size of most Maine school’s and the relatively small size of most subgroups.

As with priority schools, focus schools will be required to conduct a comprehensive school self-assessment supported and facilitated by a Maine DOE school improvement specialist. The results of this thoughtful and collaborative process will be used to inform the development of a multi-year school improvement plan – which will be signed by the principal, superintendent, and school board chair - that must propose implementing research-based best practices that align with the seven ESEA Turnaround principles determined by the U.S. Department of Education representing the following categories: ensuring both (1) strong leadership and (2) effective teaching are in place, (3) redesigning the school day, (4) strengthening instruction, (5) using data, (6) improving the school environment, and (7) engaging families and the community. A more complete list of the proposed required and optional interventions and supports for Maine schools appears at the end of this section. Priority schools will receive additional funding, engage in continuous school improvement and will be monitored and supported by the DOE for at least two years and will be required to demonstrate progress toward their school learning targets.

2.E.ii Provide the SEA’s list of focus schools in Table 2.

2.E.iii Describe the process and timeline the SEA will use to ensure that each LEA that has one or more focus schools will identify the specific needs of the LEA’s focus schools and their

students. Provide examples of and justifications for the interventions focus schools will be required to implement to improve the performance of students who are the furthest behind.

As with the priority schools, a Maine DOE School Improvement Specialist will be assigned to each focus school to provide guidance and support. Once the Specialist is assigned, the school leadership will conduct an overall school needs assessment aligned with the ESEA Turnaround Principles (facilitated and supported by DOE School Improvement Specialist). Based on the results of the self-assessment and on student achievement and attainment data, the school leadership team and the Specialist will construct a 2-year school improvement plan and demonstrate how it is aligned with the ESEA Turnaround Principles.

The nature of the interventions and supports within the focus schools will be dedicated to closing the gap.

	Priority	Focus	Progressing	CIPS	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Self-Assessment	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Improvement Plan	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Alignment with 7 ESEA Turnaround Principles	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available
Targeted Title I accountability / ESEA directed funds	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Convert to Schoolwide Title I status	✓	✓	Available	Available	Available	Available	N/A
School-based improvement team	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
DOE Specialist Assigned	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Affinity / Special Issue Networks	✓	✓	Available (if applicable)	✓	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)
Regional Networks	✓	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)	Available (if applicable)
Specialized DOE support (RTI, Content, etc.)	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Transformational Leaders Network	✓	✓	Available (if applicable)	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A

	Priority	Focus	Progressing	CIPS	Meeting	Title I	All Public
Quarterly progress reports	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
Annual reporting	✓	✓	N/A	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
DOE-sponsored school improvement events	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
User-friendly Maine DOE web-based improvement resources for best practices (instruction, leadership, community engagement)	✓	✓	Available	✓	Available	Available	Available
Online AMO, SAI, and Gap Index calculator	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available	Available

2.E.iv Provide the criteria the SEA will use to determine when a school that is making significant progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps exits focus status and a justification for the criteria selected.

Maine DOE will use a Within-School Achievement Gap index to determine whether or not its focus schools are making significant progress. The system of support will be in effect for at least two years before an exit is considered. In order to exit, focus schools must demonstrate progress on every variable for which there is an annual target.

Once the focus schools do exit this status, there will be an opportunity to continue receiving support from DOE Team.

TABLE 2: REWARD, PRIORITY, AND FOCUS SCHOOLS

Provide the SEA's list of reward, priority, and focus schools using the Table 2 template. Use the key to indicate the criteria used to identify a school as a reward, priority, or focus school.

Maine's list of reward, priority, and focus schools is included in attachment 9. There were no high schools in the state with a graduation rate lower than 60%. The four schools currently involved in the state's SIG program and now beginning their second year, are – per ESEA Flexibility guidelines – also designated as priority schools.

2.F PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS FOR OTHER TITLE I SCHOOLS

- 2.F Describe how the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system will provide incentives and supports to ensure continuous improvement in other Title I schools that, based on the SEA's new AMOs and other measures, are not making progress in improving student achievement and narrowing achievement gaps, and an explanation of how these incentives and supports are likely to improve student achievement and school performance, close achievement gaps, and increase the quality of instruction for students.

Of Maine's approximately 600 schools, nearly 400 are eligible for Title I funding. The Maine DOE is keenly aware of the needs of its schools that do not fall into the Priority and Focus school categories. The School Accountability Index's data will be used to populate the already established practice of creating annual school report cards with more information about growth in addition to status, a key incentive for LEAs to think about more than the yearly snapshot of its students. As is described earlier in this request, many of the supports and interventions provided by the Maine DOE will be available to all LEAs, regardless of their accountability designation or their Title I status.

2.G BUILD SEA, LEA, AND SCHOOL CAPACITY TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

- 2.G Describe the SEA's process for building SEA, LEA, and school capacity to improve student learning in all schools and, in particular, in low-performing schools and schools with the largest achievement gaps, including through:
- i. timely and comprehensive monitoring of, and technical assistance for, LEA implementation of interventions in priority and focus schools;
 - ii. ensuring sufficient support for implementation of interventions in priority schools, focus schools, and other Title I schools identified under the SEA's differentiated recognition, accountability, and support system (including through leveraging funds the LEA was previously required to reserve under ESEA section 1116(b)(10), SIG funds, and other Federal funds, as permitted, along with State and local resources); and
 - iii. holding LEAs accountable for improving school and student performance, particularly for turning around their priority schools.

Explain how this process is likely to succeed in improving SEA, LEA, and school capacity.

As described throughout the application, Maine DOE's focus includes building awareness, guiding the transition, implementing the planned activities, and providing ongoing support to LEAs and schools in order to improve student achievement. Maine DOE's system of accountability – starting with college and career ready standards and assessments – is designed to provide feedback to assist in timely and comprehensive monitoring of and support for priority and focus schools.

Maine DOE is piloting Indistar, a web-based system for use with district and/or school improvement teams to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities, with its CIPS schools during the 2012-13 school year. This new tool will be monitored and possible expansion will be considered if the system proves to be an agile way to provide timely feedback to LEAs and schools.

While the Maine DOE has taken a number of steps in recent years to build its own capacity to support the state's schools and districts, work remains to more carefully align the Department's various teams and initiatives in a way that more strategically supports learning. The Department is in the process of hiring for the newly-created position Chief Academic Officer. This position will be responsible to guiding and coordinating the various learning-related staff, teams and initiatives underway at the Department, with the goal of building greater Department capacity to support Maine's educators within existing resources.

The state is also fortunate to have a number of schools and districts that have taken promising steps toward making a proficiency-based, learner-centered instructional system. The Department's Center for Best Practices, supported by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, was established to focus on research and reporting related to proficiency-based systems here in Maine. It serves as a clearinghouse of materials, support and case studies related to learner-centered instructional practices. Teaching has been and continues to be a largely solitary practice providing few opportunities for collaboration and sharing of best practices. The Center was designed to remove this isolation. On the Maine DOE's website LEA leaders, school leaders, and teachers can access:

- **Case studies.** Detailed reports, reflections and materials from school districts that are paving the way in proficiency-based learning.
- **Videos.** Three districts showcase their best practices on film.
- **Resources.** A compilation of materials used to implement learner-centered systems in each district.

Building capacity is highly likely with the CAO coordinating support within the SEA, Maine DOE creating and maintaining online data tools for LEAs to target instruction, and providing support with tools such as the Center for Best Practices. Combined, these resources will enable the SEA and the LEAs throughout the state to target instruction and to provide support to educators based on student need.

PRINCIPLE 3: SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION AND LEADERSHIP

3.A DEVELOP AND ADOPT GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Select the option that pertains to the SEA and provide the corresponding description and evidence, as appropriate, for the option selected.

<p>Option A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has not already developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the SEA’s plan to develop and adopt guidelines for local teacher and principal evaluation and support systems by the end of the 2012–2013 school year; ii. a description of the process the SEA will use to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines; and iii. an assurance that the SEA will submit to the Department a copy of the guidelines that it will adopt by the end of the 2012–2013 school year (see Assurance 14). 	<p>Option B</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the SEA has developed and adopted all of the guidelines consistent with Principle 3, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. a copy of the guidelines the SEA has adopted (Attachment 10) and an explanation of how these guidelines are likely to lead to the development of evaluation and support systems that improve student achievement and the quality of instruction for students; ii. evidence of the adoption of the guidelines (Attachment 11); and iii. a description of the process the SEA used to involve teachers and principals in the development of these guidelines.
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Maine policymakers this year took great strides toward measuring and improving the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders, with passage of LD 1858, “An Act to Ensure Effective Teaching and School Leadership” (Appendix XX). That legislation lays the groundwork for Maine’s plan to meet the requirements of and develop a high-quality plan for Principle 3 of the ESEA Flexibility Request.

Prior to passage of LD 1858, “local control” of most education matters meant that there was little coordinated, clear policy regarding educator effectiveness. While state law provided that superintendents were responsible for evaluating staff, there was no specific requirement for evaluation of all teachers or school leaders, much less standards for doing so. The state’s only “definition” of an effective teacher was laid out in the “Ten Initial Standards for Educator Certification,” the minimal requirements to become a teacher. Past the stage where a teacher earned professional licensure, there were no statewide policies or efforts to ensure effective teachers or administrators.

LD 1858 enacted a new chapter in Maine’s Education Law, Title 20-A of the Maine Revised Statutes. This new chapter, “Chapter 508, Educator Effectiveness,” requires each of the State’s school administrative units (SAUs) to develop and implement a “performance evaluation and professional growth (PE/PG) system” for all teachers and principals. Each “system” must meet state standards and be approved by the state Department of Education. This system requires:

- A clear set of professional practice standards that educators will be expected to meet
- Multiple ways of measuring an educator’s effectiveness, including evaluation of professional practices and a look at the educator’s impact on student achievement
- Opportunities for educators to improve their effectiveness by understanding where they fall short of expectations, and a clearly spelled-out professional improvement plan designed to enable them to meet expectations

LD 1858 lays out the basic structure of the PE/PG system, creates a process for fleshing out the details of the state standards and sets forth a timeline for development and implementation of systems on the local level.

Key Elements of the System

The basic structure of the new Maine PE/PG system is set forth in Chapter 508 of Title 20-A. Under Chapter 508, a PE/PG system consists of the following elements:

1. Standards of professional practice by which the performance of educators must be evaluated;
2. Multiple measures of educator effectiveness (in addition to professional practice evaluations) including but not limited to student learning and growth;
3. A rating scale consisting of 4 levels of effectiveness (at least 2 levels for “effective” educators and one level for “ineffective” educators), based on multiple measures, with the professional growth opportunities and employment consequences tied to each level;
4. A process for using information from the evaluation process to inform professional development;
5. Implementation standards that include trained evaluators, evaluation on a regular basis, training of educators to enable them to participate in the system in a meaningful way, peer review components and a local steering committee to review and refine the local system; and
6. Opportunities for educators rated as “ineffective” to implement a professional improvement plan.

These basic structural components are designed to ensure that systems are transparent, fair and meaningful, and to ensure that the PE/PG systems meet the criteria for ESEA Flexibility requests.

Timeline for Implementation

LD 1858 lays out a process for developing and implementing PE/PG systems over a four-year period. This period complies with the ESEA flexibility request requirements, as well as providing a reasonable length of time for further state policymaking as well as local adoption, piloting and adjustment.

- In the first year following passage of LD 1858 (2012-2013), stakeholders and policymakers at the State level will work together to flesh out details of the required systems.
- In the second year, 2013-2014, local SAUs must develop local systems that comply with the state requirements. There is likely to be some flexibility within the state standards, to allow

variations among SAUs, so this year would be the time for local policymakers, parents, administrators and educators to create the best system for local conditions.

- In school year 2014-15, local SAUs will pilot their systems, either by using them only in certain schools, with a portion of educators or with all educators but without “counting” the results. The pilot allows people to see how the system works, and make adjustments to ensure that it meets expectations.
- In school year, 2015-16, local systems must be fully implemented.

The Statute

LD 1858, which enacted Chapter 508 into law, earned a unanimous favorable vote of the Legislature’s Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, and was ultimately passed by unanimous vote of both houses of Maine’s legislature, demonstrating that key state policymakers understand the need to for the state to address educator effectiveness in a comprehensive way. LD 1858 also directed the Department to create a stakeholder group to recommend ways to identify the details of the system, and to work with the Department and the Legislature to put the finishing touches on the system over the upcoming year.

The Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC) is the 16-member stakeholder group created in LD 1858. It includes teachers, administrators, state policymakers, school board members and representatives of the business community, the general public, and teacher preparation programs. Members were nominated by professional associations and other stakeholder groups and appointed by the Commissioner of Education.

MEEC was assigned the general task of recommending standards for implementing a system of evaluation and support of teachers and principals consistent with the requirements of Title 20-A, chapter 508. MEEC recommendations will be sent to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by November 1, 2012. Based on those recommendations, the Department of Education will also begin a rulemaking process to place the details of the new systems into Department rule. The proposed rule, and the MEEC recommendations will be reviewed by the Legislature in the First Regular Session of the 126th Legislature, beginning in January, 2013. The Department will work diligently to have final legislative approval of the rule before the end of the 2012-2013 school year.

MEEC Discussions to Date

The Council has met several times regularly since the end of May, formulating its governing structure and work plan, and making some significant decisions about the structure of the developing systems. More work is ahead, but the group has demonstrated its commitment to work hard, to productively address concerns and to work toward consensus on all issues.

One over-arching issue that the Council will continue to struggle with is the need to find the right balance between uniformity and flexibility. With its history of local control of education matters, Maine leans toward supporting local flexibility. An additional concern leaning toward flexibility is that many SAUs, including those participating in the State’s Maine Schools for Excellence initiative, have already spent significant resources creating robust evaluation and support systems, and the Council is reluctant to force them to throw out the work already done. But with the desire for greater coordination and equity across the state, there is also a desire for creating more uniformity of PE/PG systems.

One of the Council's earliest decisions concerns the set of professional practice standards for both teachers and principals. The Council acknowledged that many districts already have systems in place or in development which may or may not share common features. While aware and supportive of local governance and the valuable work underway, the Council also seeks to encourage greater uniformity. For example, the Council will recommend that districts use one particular set of the professional practice standards along with a related set of observation rubrics. However, because there are a handful of such standards currently in use with sufficient level of alignment between them, districts will also be able to select from among a small set of other standards as long as they are closely aligned with those recommended by the Council.

Further work will be done by MEEC during the coming months. Their meetings are open to public and there will be opportunities to comment through the rulemaking Legislative processes.

3.B ENSURE LEAS IMPLEMENT TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- 3.B Provide the SEA's process for ensuring that each LEA develops, adopts, pilots, and implements, with the involvement of teachers and principals, including mechanisms to review, revise, and improve, high-quality teacher and principal evaluation and support systems consistent with the SEA's adopted guidelines.

The following High Quality Table outlines the significant series of steps the Maine DOE and the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council will undertake over the next several years to develop and implement a Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth (PE/PG) system that meet the requirements of state statute and rule.

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Enact legislation laying out basic principles for a PE/PG system, and a process for fleshing out the system	Done	Commissioner	Public Law 2011, chapter 635 (LD 1858), see Appendix 4		Accomplished
Appoint members of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council (MEEC), pursuant to membership list in PL 2011, chapter 635	Done	Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; Professional Associations (MEA, MSSA, MSBA, MPA, MADSEC)	Membership List		Accomplished

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Schedule, plan and implement MEEC meetings	The MEEC has met on May 29 th ; June 20 th ; July 9 th ; July 27 th ; August 10 th ; August 24 th . Future meetings are scheduled for September 14 th and 28 th . October schedule is TBD.	Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; Council Co-chair Grace Leavitt; Mark Kostin; MEEC members	Agendas	Significant staff time of Commissioner, Policy & Programs Director; Mark Kostin will continue to be needed to staff the Council	Time commitment of members, now that the school year has started.
Review and track progress of school districts participating in the “Maine Schools for Excellence” (MSFE) project, funded by a federal TIF grant	Ongoing; MSFE Director made presentation to MEEC at June 20 th meeting; Department and professional association heads receive quarterly updates through MSFE Executive Committee meetings	MSFE Project Director; professional association directors, Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; MEEC members	Lewiston School District TIF Progress Report Other progress reports during throughout the year	N/A	N/A
Prepare and submit report to the Joint Standing Committee with MEEC recommendations	Report is due November 1, 2012. Drafts will be reviewed in late October.	Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; Council Co-chair Grace Leavitt; Mark Kostin; MEEC members	Report document, when submitted	Significant staff time of Commissioner and Policy & Programs Director	N/A

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
<p>Begin Department rulemaking process to provide detailed standards for the PE/PG system, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional practice standards Implementation requirements Teacher of record determinations 	<p>The Department will begin the rulemaking process with the goal of completing the <u>administrative portion</u> of the process by December 31st. This will require that a draft rule be proposed not later than November 1st, with a public hearing and comment period during the month of November, followed by review of comments, revision of the rule as needed in response to the comments, and approval by the Attorney General and the Office of the Governor, prior to submittal to the Legislature.</p>	<p>Policy & Programs Director, Commissioner, utilizing available recommendations from the MEEC</p>	<p>Timeline for Administrative Rulemaking Process; Statute regarding Legislative Review of Major Substantive Rules; Department's Regulatory Agenda indicating rulemaking pursuant to Public Law 2011, chapter 635</p>	<p>Significant DOE Staff Time will be needed to complete the proposed rules and to respond to public comment.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Submit provisionally adopted rule to the Legislature by legislative deadline (likely to be early to mid-January)</p>	<p>DOE must complete the administrative rulemaking process and file the "provisionally adopted" rule with the Legislature by early to mid-January.</p>	<p>Policy & Programs Director; Commissioner</p>	<p>Rulemaking documents, including proposed rule, public comments and responses and provisionally adopted rule</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Work with the members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs to obtain passage of a Legislative Resolve authorizing final adoption of the rule implementing the PE/PG system	Once the provisionally adopted rule is filed with the Legislature (mid-January), the Revisor's Office prepares a Resolve authorizing adoption of the rule. This Resolve is referred to the Education Committee, which holds a public hearing and as many work sessions as needed to make its decision. The timing of the public hearing, and the number of work sessions required is a matter of legislative discretion. The Department will encourage review early in the Legislative session (February), with a goal of obtaining passage of the Resolve by the end of March, and final adoption of the rule by the Department in April or May 2013, depending on whether the Legislature directs the Department to make significant changes to the rule.	Commissioner; Policy & Programs Director; professional associations, MEEC members	Legislative Resolve – original and enacted	Significant staff time of Commissioner and Policy & Programs Director	N/A

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Identify Targeted Funds local implementation	Section A-5 of PL 2011, c. 635 requires the Commissioner to calculate the amount available to assist SAUs in developing and implementing PE/PG systems. Targeted funds will be available beginning in the 2013-14 school year. The budget for school funding for 2013-14 will be included in the Governor's proposed Budget Bill for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015. This bill is generally submitted to the Legislature in _____ of the First Regular Session of the Legislature. The Department will work with finance experts to determine the amounts currently calculated for evaluations, and determine potential additional amounts for that purpose.	Commissioner; Deputy Commissioner	Inclusion of targeted funds in budget bill (school funding section)	Significant staff time of Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner	N/A

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Provide ongoing opportunities for involvement of all stakeholders in the development and implementation of PE/PG systems that meet the requirements of state statute and rule	The November 1 st MEEC report to the Legislature may ask for continuation of the Council's role in development of the PE/PG system extending it beyond its initially stated duration	MEEC Co-Chairs	Legislative authority extending MEEC operations	Significant staff time of Commissioner, Policy & Programs Director; Mark Kostin will continue to be needed to staff the Council	N/A
Provide guidance and technical assistance to the field in development of PE/PG systems that meet the requirements of state statute and rule	The weekly Commissioner's Update will include ongoing reports of rulemaking and legislative action on PE/PG system requirements. Once the Legislature authorizes final rule adoption, the Department will provide information through several media, which may include Webinars, conferences, and written materials.	Office of the Commissioner	Communications and materials	Significant DOE staff time	N/A
Implement a process for Department approval of local PE/PG systems	Local development and DOE approval is expected to occur during the 2013-14 school year	Office of the Commissioner	Documentation of DOE approval process described in proposed rule	Significant DOE staff time	N/A

Key Milestone or Activity	Detailed Timeline	Party or Parties Responsible	Evidence (Attachment)	Resources (e.g., staff time, additional funding)	Significant Obstacles
Local system pilots occur, with a clear process for evaluating and adjusting systems as needed	School year 2014-15	LEAs and Office of the Commissioner	Guidance to LEAs on evaluating and adjusting systems	Significant DOE staff and LEA time	N/A

Attachment 1

Notice to LEAs

Maine Department of Education

Home → Accountability & Improvement System → Comments on Request to Hold Targets Steady

Comments on Request to Hold Accountability Targets Steady

The Maine Department of Education has requested a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education that will allow Maine to hold its accountability targets -- the percentage of students expected to reach proficiency on state math and reading assessments in order for a school to make "adequate yearly progress" -- at the 2010-11 levels for another year.

The Department sent the following notice to all Maine school superintendents and No Child Left Behind coordinators requesting feedback. The Department received four comments in response. Three voiced support for the waiver request; another requested clarification.

Public Notice

This communication serves as notice that the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) intends to submit an application to the U. S. Department of Education to request a waiver of section 1111(b)(2)(H) of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), as amended. This will permit Maine to use the same annual measurable objectives (AMOs) used for adequate yearly progress (AYP) determinations in the 2010–2011 school year, based on assessments given in 2010-2011, to make AYP determinations for the 2011-2012 school year, based on assessments given in the 2011-2012 school year. The Maine Department of Education believes using the same AMOs for AYP determinations based on assessments administered in the 2011-2012 school year as it used for the 2010-2011 school year will help increase the quality of instruction for students and improve the academic achievement of students by removing the pressure of meeting escalating AMOs so that MDOE and other stakeholders within the State can devote necessary time and resources to planning for the implementation of ESEA flexibility, which MDOE needs additional time to do. Comments related to this request for waivers should be sent to Rachelle Tome, ESEA Federal Programs Director, at rachelle.tome@maine.gov. Comments will be accepted through Friday, March 5, 2012.

Originally posted at <http://www.maine.gov/education/nclb/publicnotice.html> on Feb. 21, 2012.

Site Information

Attachment 2a

*Comments on request received from LEAs and
others— Fall 2011*

Overview

1. over 1,500 Mainers answered the survey, including:
 - a. 580 classroom educators
 - b. 268 parents
 - c. 187 administrators (school + district)
 - d. 85 school board members
 - e. 12 students
 - f. every county was represented
2. regarding the determination of the measure of a school's success, the majority of respondents supported continuing to use the familiar indicators of student achievement from state assessments and graduation rates (the highest level of importance was attached to this one), though they also supported adding the measures that were suggested in the survey.
3. The additional measures that garnered the greatest support - in terms of the importance attached to them by all respondents, include:
 - a. drop out rates
 - b. data from teacher surveys
 - c. data on school climate
 - d. data on parental engagement and from parent surveys
 - e. data from student surveys
 - f. improvement on state tests
4. The support for these enhanced measures of effectiveness holds true when disaggregating across all groups who responded to the survey
5. Regarding the section on educator effectiveness, each of the suggested measures received strong or very strong support, with the lowest level of importance attached to achievement on state assessments. There is greater support for improvement on this measure, however.
6. While there still is moderate support for these additional measures among teachers, when broken down by group, there is slightly higher support among administrators, and very strong support for the incorporation of these multiple measures among parents.
7. It is important to note, however, that approximately 10% of the entire sample size and of each of the sub-groups did not attach any importance to either absolute performance or growth as measured by state assessments on determination of educator effectiveness.

Please rank each of the following based on how important you think it is to include as a measure of a school's success.

	1 = Not important	2 = Somewhat important	3 = Important	4 = Very important	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Data on school climate	2.2% (31)	15.4% (217)	39.1% (550)	41.9% (590)	1.4% (20)	3.22	1,408
Attendance rates	1.6% (23)	13.0% (183)	38.1% (535)	46.6% (655)	0.7% (10)	3.31	1,406
Dropout rates	2.2% (31)	13.5% (191)	36.2% (511)	47.2% (667)	0.8% (12)	3.30	1,412
Graduation rates	1.7% (24)	8.4% (119)	35.6% (501)	53.4% (752)	0.9% (13)	3.42	1,409
Data on levels of parent engagement	3.8% (54)	18.8% (265)	36.7% (517)	39.9% (562)	0.7% (10)	3.14	1,408
Student performance on state assessments	6.7% (94)	34.1% (479)	40.8% (574)	18.0% (253)	0.4% (6)	2.70	1,406
Data from student surveys	2.7% (38)	22.9% (323)	42.0% (593)	31.8% (448)	0.6% (9)	3.03	1,411
Data from parent surveys	2.1% (30)	24.2% (341)	46.0% (647)	26.7% (376)	0.9% (13)	2.98	1,407
Improvement in student performance on state assessments	6.0% (85)	25.8% (365)	38.8% (548)	29.0% (410)	0.4% (6)	2.91	1,414
Staff turnover rate	4.3% (60)	19.7% (276)	40.3% (566)	34.8% (489)	0.9% (13)	3.07	1,404
Data from teacher surveys	2.1% (29)	15.6% (220)	39.3% (554)	42.1% (594)	0.9% (13)	3.23	1,410

Please suggest an additional measure or explain your rankings.

559

answered question

1,417

skipped question

99

To obtain ESEA flexibility, the Maine Department of Education must develop guidelines for teacher and administrator evaluation systems. Please rank each of the following based on how important you think it is to include as a measure of the effectiveness of teachers and administrators.

	1 = Not important	2 = Somewhat important	3 = Important	4 = Very important	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Student attendance rates	6.7% (87)	25.0% (325)	35.2% (458)	32.0% (417)	1.2% (15)	2.94	1,302
Classroom observations by peers	4.0% (52)	18.4% (241)	42.1% (551)	35.0% (458)	0.6% (8)	3.09	1,310
Classroom observations by supervisors	1.9% (25)	15.6% (205)	40.9% (538)	40.9% (538)	0.6% (8)	3.22	1,314
Data from student surveys	4.6% (60)	29.8% (389)	41.8% (546)	23.4% (305)	0.5% (6)	2.84	1,306
Data from parent surveys	4.8% (63)	32.2% (422)	42.9% (562)	19.6% (256)	0.5% (6)	2.78	1,309
Student achievement on state assessments	9.7% (127)	38.1% (499)	36.9% (482)	14.9% (195)	0.4% (5)	2.57	1,308
Student discipline records and procedures	8.7% (114)	29.9% (392)	39.5% (518)	21.4% (281)	0.5% (6)	2.74	1,311
Portfolios of teaching accomplishments	7.9% (103)	23.7% (310)	38.1% (498)	29.8% (389)	0.5% (7)	2.90	1,307
Student graduation rates	4.3% (56)	18.1% (237)	39.8% (520)	36.5% (478)	1.3% (17)	3.10	1,308
Progress toward meeting nationally recognized performance standards (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium)	10.9% (142)	28.4% (369)	37.8% (492)	21.6% (281)	1.2% (16)	2.71	1,300

Improvement in student achievement on state assessments	8.0% (105)	29.2% (383)	39.4% (517)	23.0% (302)	0.4% (5)	2.78	1,312
Data from teacher/administrator self-evaluation	4.5% (59)	21.9% (286)	44.8% (586)	28.2% (369)	0.5% (7)	2.97	1,307
Administrator observations by supervisors	2.9% (38)	17.4% (228)	43.1% (566)	35.6% (468)	1.0% (13)	3.13	1,313
Data from teacher surveys of administrators	2.9% (38)	18.6% (243)	43.9% (574)	33.6% (439)	1.0% (13)	3.09	1,307

Please suggest an additional measure or explain your ranking.

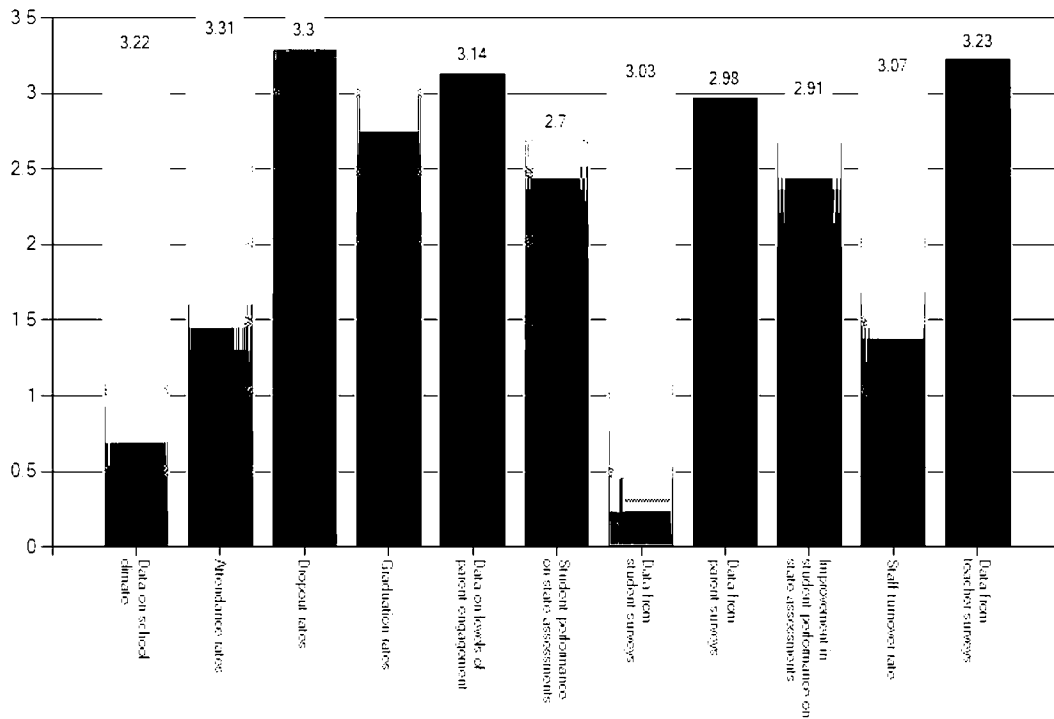
359

answered question 1,319

skipped question 197

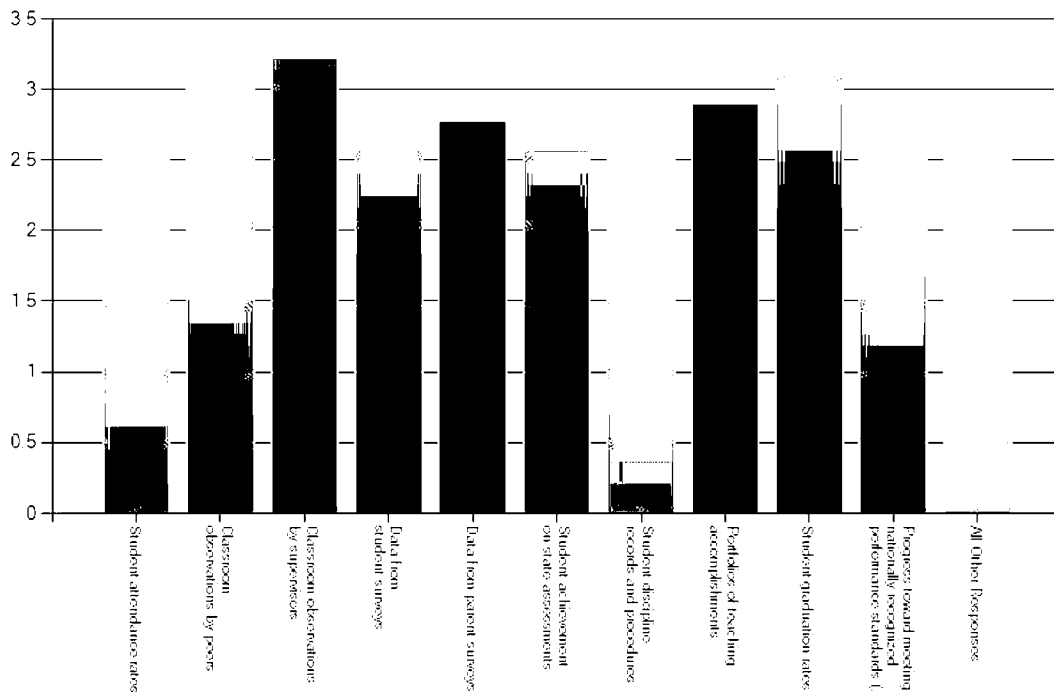
Question #4

Please rank each of the following based on how important you think it is to include as a measure of a school's success.



Question #5



To obtain ESEA flexibility, the Maine Department of Education must develop guidelines for teacher and administrator evaluation systems. Please rank each of the following based on how important you think it is to include as a measure of the effectiveness of teachers and administrators.



ESEA flexibility guidelines require that data on growth in student achievement be a "significant factor" in teacher and principal evaluation systems, but the guidelines do not define the meaning of "significant." Should there be a single, statewide definition of "significant factor" (for example, growth in student achievement must count for XX percent of the score in measuring a teacher's performance), or should each school district be allowed to decide for itself how student achievement data is to be used in teacher and principal evaluations?



		Response Percent	Response Count
Single, statewide definition	<div></div>	37.5%	480
Local decision	<div></div>	62.5%	801
	Explain/Comments		492
	answered question		1,281
	skipped question		235

7. To obtain ESEA flexibility, the state education agency must explain how it plans to recognize "reward schools" - schools judged to be high-performing through Maine's new accountability and recognition system. How do you suggest we recognize such schools?

 Create Chart  Download

	Response Percent	Response Count
Innovation bonus: a monetary award to allow the school to try something creative and innovative	43.9%	558
Highly publicized recognition ceremony	24.3%	309
Statewide summit where schools share best practices	68.2%	867
Flexibility from certain state requirements	30.4%	382
Opportunity to serve as a "lab" school from which other schools could learn	66.2%	842
Please share additional ideas or explain your choices. Show Responses		287
answered question		1,271
skipped question		245

8. Currently, schools that do not receive federal Title I funds (funds intended for schools with populations of low-income students) are not subject to some of the requirements of the accountability system under the No Child Left Behind law and are not eligible to receive "school improvement" funds or "school improvement" technical assistance from the Maine Department of Education. Which of the following would you support?

 Create Chart  Download

	Response Percent	Response Count
Require non-Title I schools to meet the same accountability requirements as Title I schools and provide them with "school improvement" funds and technical assistance	37.7%	472
Require non-Title I schools to meet the same accountability requirements as Title I schools and provide them with technical assistance, but not "school improvement" funds	26.6%	333
Keep the current Title I funding and accountability provisions intact	13.2%	165
Don't know/Have no opinion	22.6%	283
Explain/Comments Show Responses		277
answered question		1,253
skipped question		263

Attachment 2b

Comments on request received from LEAs and others – August 2012

ESEA Flexibility Waiver Summary Survey Respondent Comments Organized by Principle

With regard to Principle 1, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Creating an emphasis on "career" readiness is a strength. Creating flexibility in graduation requirements is also a strength.

Setting a standard for the state.

your new standards appear achievable, as along as the "all" is meaningfully applied -- how will you ensure equity?

None

Lofty expectations

With regard to Principle 1, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

It is unclear how the community will participate more fully in the career readiness piece. Not enough pathways between school and community/county/ state opportunities in place. No mention of STEM programs and how that could look in any given community.

The waiver states, "developing and administering annual, statewide, aligned, high-quality assessments, and corresponding academic achievement standards, that measure student growth in at least grades 3-8 and at least once in high school." How does this make sense to test young children so frequently (grades 3-8) and just once in high school to help determine college readiness?

your standards change should specify that teachers are themselves required to upgrade their training beyond the industrial model training they continue to rely upon / everyone presumes is adequate for the 21st century

Why didn't we stay with the Maine Learning Results? Continuously changing the standards and targets have created poor alignment and lots of confusion. The MEA Science standards have not changed... if you look at student proficiency rates in this area, they are significantly above the rates in reading and math. Teachers have had time to backwards plan, establish purposeful activities to support student achievement, and perfect their skills and curriculum in Science... not so in reading and math.

Goals are set without detail of how support will be provided: How will this work be funded? Remember Maine's Blaine House scholarships which funded many of our state's best teachers in their continuing education? Where is the support for growth and sustenance of ALL teachers?

With regard to Principle 1, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Maine has adopted the "Common Core" standards which is a start. I feel that ELA and Math are well defined and educators can use them relatively easily in regards to translating the standards into the learning that students need.

With regard to Principle 1, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

The other subjects like science and social studies are missing from the "Common Core" and Maine has not adopted a set of standards that defines learning outcomes in these areas other than the outdated Maine Learning Results. The Common Core broadly defines "Reading standards for literacy in science, social studies and technical subjects, but does not specifically state what should be taught in the science, social studies and "technical" subjects and to what extent it should be taught. Since teachers and school districts do not have well defined standards, it is difficult to ask them to "reach for the stars" when the stars are not visible in the sky. In addition to that our students will be using technology to do their everyday jobs that has not even been invented yet. Teaching computer technology should be a priority and it is not. Our students, the adults of the future, need experience in this starting now and must stay up to date as time goes on. MLTI was a great start, but more needs to be done. How will they be able to do their job if they cannot use the technology? Before that, how will students be successful in college if they have no technology background from middle and high school? One great place to start would be for the state to adopt the ISTE NETS standards for students (as well as for teachers). Here is information from their website: "ISTE's NETS for Students (NETS•S) are the standards for evaluating the skills and knowledge students need to learn effectively and live productively in an increasingly global and digital world. Simply being able to use technology is no longer enough. Today's students need to be able to use technology to analyze, learn, and explore. Digital age skills are vital for preparing students to work, live, and contribute to the social and civic fabric of their communities."

Common Core State Standards Smarter Balance assessment system?

An assessment system to measure students' progress toward meeting the CCSS

With regard to Principle 1, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Maine already had strong career and college readiness standards in place with the Maine Learning Results. Adoption of and integration of the CCSS is also underway. Prior to NCLB, Maine had among the highest performing students in the nation as measured by the apples-to-apples NAEP. Since NCLB instructional time has steadily been eroded by testing (often by for-profit entities), and learning for Maine students has suffered as a result. They were doing much better under the guidance of the Maine DOE without federal interference.

The emphasis on our shift to the Common Core is the single greatest strength as it says, "As Maine goes, so goes the nation." It aligns us with majority and puts us squarely in the momentum toward a fully-realized standards-based system in Maine.

The use of research based studies to formulate final working documents

That finally the need to develop a career-ready path is being considered! To think that the vast majority of students will embark on a college path is ridiculous.

Moving to Common Core Standards and development of 21st century science standards and having resources available on the website

With regard to Principle 1, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Dedicated funding to implement the CCSS. A plan to address children living in poverty, which is a large factor in educational outcomes.

I believe it would be in the waivers best interest to identify clearly and specifically programs and initiatives in Maine public schools that support both college and career readiness for all students. The strength of our vocational schools and the growing numbers of schools in Maine that integrate academics with career/vocational prep i.e. Mt. Blue High School and Foster Tech. The Mass Customized Learning Cohort, the Positive Youth Development Institute -- initiatives and organizations such as these exist because Maine believes so strongly in achievement for all. Expectations can be defined by more than how we define curriculum.

It is important to better understand the effect of poverty on student achievement. The generational poverty found in some communities and its effect on educators in their attempt to educate their children must be recognized and accounted for. There are certainly some exceptions to the general rule but there is a reason why some areas of Maine continue to lag behind the rest of the state.

The career-ready path is poorly defined and developed. Since this is probably the path the majority of students will embark upon this needs to be carefully crafted.

Better system for measuring growth

With regard to Principle 1, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Our children are being allowed to proceed as they learn. They should be tested that way as well.

I'm not sure what the strengths are. Is it a strength that college and career readiness is synonymous w/ Maine Learning Results and Common Core? I know that in our district we've been working on this for many, many, many years.

Maine has articulated the standards necessary for ALL students.

I like that support will be given to schools. I also like the fact that schools that have a large number of Title I students are taken into account.

With regard to Principle 1, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

You have totally disregarded students with disabilities. Firstly, they are included as a sub group-yet receive none of the financial benefit of title 1. For example, If a child has a language disorder-(and the budget for spec. ed has been trimmed to nothing) and does not receive adequate support in this area, there is no way that they are going to be able to take the NECAP tests. The alternative test (sorry can't think of the name off hand) is something my house cat could pass.

It seems like we are entering a new (but familiar) cycle of documenting achievement, writing and rewriting standards and proposals for the purposes of documentation for the State, but we still assess and evaluate using the same sorts of standardized tests. Nationally we need to have college and career readiness in reading and math (right?). It seems like we always are focusing on these content areas... What about art and music and history and science? Literacy, whether it is reading, writing, math, etc. could be promoted within other content areas. Really the 3 R's are the old fashioned way of organizing school. It the "real" world the 3 R's are the tools to use within the subject areas of science, art, music, literature, history, health, etc. In our district money and time is always spent on the 3 R's (since the State assessments focus on these) and those of us who teach in other content areas are pretty much left on our own. I think this might be one reason we are having such a hard time transforming our schools into rich 21st century learning communities. I guess this response belongs in #5....

I am unclear as to whether this portion of the work contains the information regarding the financing of students engaging in early college programs.

I think that special education students and ELL students should have special consideration and specialized support to schools.

With regard to Principle 1, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

With regard to Principle 1, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

It appears that Maine will be changing state-level assessments. How will the state be able to compare this new testing to NECAP scores? There is no mention of school readiness or a common kindergarten screening tool. What about the role of early childhood education in all of this?

Replacement of MLRs with Common Core.

What supports will be in place to help school districts transition to new standards?

Measuring student achievement with a growth model

How will we measure growth between the NECAPS and Smarter Balance testing, what will be built into the plan to determine growth?

It still sounds like a one size fits all plan. My students are much more diverse in their natural abilities, their upbringing and their motivation. We need to identify how ready each student is when they graduate, a diploma should not be the only indicator of success, there needs to be some way to show what each student is ready for, be it college, a prep school or a non-academic career path. The expectation in school should match what the student wants to prepare for. Too many kids leave high school with good grades, but show up to college to find they need remediation.

We have put all accountability on schools, and none on students and their families. Schools cannot enforce attendance, so how can we be expected to raise standards. The students and families who make little or no effort to improve, or who deliberately underachieve to subvert the school's performance, should not be included in measurements of school effectiveness.

Too many schools in Maine have already changed the standards from the Common Core in their own schools, so that they are less rigorous than the actual Common Core Standards. It seems that we should either adopt all of them, or at least be honest that we are not adopting the entire packet of standards, so that the public will be aware of these differences when the assessment results are shared.

Not all subjects are covered. We are missing one of the most important subjects for 21st century learners: computer and technology education standards.

clear plan in place

more detail as to how Maine intends to ensure standards are met outside of access to resources.do we have any specific plans to put resources into practice

With regard to Principle 1, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

For students to go where their strength and interest is. It is also making some systems look at their curriculum for a better up to date one.

Made more realistic goals - is it realistic that 100% attain proficiency? Education is not a factory turning out 100% acceptable product. I feel it is realistic to show a percentage of improvement.

The waiver request espouses commitment to providing a strong foundation in this category. Aligning with the Common Core standards is a positive move away from ambiguous Learning Results. none

It's very hard to determine strengths because you've ignored a major part of our school's programs, namely the laptop initiative that has been in place for ten years.

With regard to Principle 1, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Clearer expectations and standards, as well as real life training.

Can't think of anything missing.

First off, if the waiver is written as carefully as the overview, it needs to be proofread. There is nothing that says how these expectations are to be met.

what will be required of parents and students in reaching graduation and being ready for college...teachers can't do this alone and parents and students need to be stakeholders....my district currently doesn't "believe in" retention so students are promoted without the skills needed to be successful. Students aren't required to attend after school tutoring if they are behind. Parents can opt out. How do we require students to participate to help them close the gap?

The state of Maine has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on the highly touted laptop program which was supposed to get our kids career-ready. After ten years, where are the results? Our schools are still under-performing, and we still have a science and engineering brain drain. Yes, it's great that each kid has a computer, but all the money spent to actually teach with them seems to have been completely wasted.

With regard to Principle 1, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

With regard to Principle 1, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Pretty concerned about SBAC's ability to deliver assessments which truly assess college and career readiness. Also, the next two years where instruction is supposed to be aligned to CCSS but schools will be judged by NECAP and SAT testing could create a distraction that mires down progress and allows educators to maintain a stance of "well, the tests aren't even aligned with the standards so you can't expect us to do well on them."

Maine is thinking outside the box to reform education through Maine Cohort for Mass Customized Learning. This is by far the most expansive approach to education in years. This research and performance-based changes in practices is the reason Maine's request is more than justified.

More emphasis on MCL, Robert Marzano and Performance-based education.

<p>With regard to Principle 2, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response</p>	<p>With regard to Principle 2, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response</p>
	<p>Unclear on "supports" to be provided to schools in need. How is "support" defined? What is the assessment tool to be implemented? I would suggest the use of the NWEA which is already in use in many schools and provides clear standards, goal and measurement.</p>
<p>The inclusion of accountability for the progress of different subgroups is very positive. Realistic goals for improvement in all areas clearly addresses the problem we have faced as a small, rural school with a very transient population.</p>	<p>I would like to see more support available for all schools, not just those that demonstrate a need for improvement. There are students at risk every where in this state.</p>
<p>There are some seeds of good thinking here. How could we hold schools accountable in a differentiated way? Great start!</p>	<p>1) If schools with smaller populations in a state like Maine are assessed by grade instead of a longitudinal measure, then there will be wide variation from year to year. One year's 8th grade could differ tremendously from another. 2) The criticism of moving targets in NCLB is contradicted by assigning a moving target! (5% every year or half of 6 year deficit every year) 3) Would a 93% proficient school fail if only 92% were proficient in that grade the next year? These would be different children than the 93% proficient, correct? This is comparing different samples. 4) The "within school gap index" will lead to yet more focus on pulling up bottom and less on pushing top. This ultimately lowers Maine's bar for education. When do we push the top? How much money is devoted to top 5% compared to bottom 15%? 5) I predict some of the top performing schools in the state will be in the list of "focus schools" based on your criteria. Think about it.</p>
	<p>I am very concerned about reducing the minimum number required to calculate subgroups from 20 to 10. I did not hear a compelling reason to make this subgroup size reduction. In schools of hundreds of students, 10 is not many, and I suspect would not be representative of the school's efforts.</p>

With regard to Principle 3, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

With regard to Principle 3, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

I like how there is an emphasis on supporting and hopefully improving weaker teachers. I

The inclusion of principals as well as teachers is positive.

Teacher evaluation includes multiple measures and educators are included in stakeholder group.

More details needed (measurements), for identifying the weak teachers within a district. Will there be incentives to teaching continually poor performing students, particularly if your status as a poor performing teacher is at stake. How does special education feature in this plan? It is unclear what the process is for teachers who do not meet the improvements.

I would like to see superintendents evaluated, also. "Multiple ways of measuring an educator's effectiveness, including evaluation of professional practices and a look at the educator's impact on student achievement." The other "multiple ways" should be itemized as clearly as "...the educator's impact on student achievement." I didn't see an "Appeals Process" section... if it is not included, I think it should be.

There needs to be a clear way to fairly assess the starting point of an educator's class when using student performance to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Other factors impact student performance such as socio-economic status, parental support, emotional trauma, differing abilities, and motivation. As a special educator, I am most concerned that my students with disabilities will be unwelcome in a classroom when their lack of achievement could adversely affect an educator's livelihood. Right now, all my students are welcome and included. We often group several students with disabilities in one classroom to efficiently use ed tech support. I'm afraid that will become a harder sell. It's easy for teachers to look good when their students come from affluent families and are highly motivated. That teachers are working with students with multiple challenges needs to be recognized in a fair way as part of the evaluation process. Teachers and schools are being evaluated on too much that is beyond their control. There also needs to be protections from negative evaluations motivated by political reasons or because of a teacher's pay scale.

With regard to Principle 3, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Allowing some use of programs already developed at the cost of much time and effort by many districts will help with buy-in. Perhaps sharing those program ideas with others will speed the process.

Teachers and principals should be evaluated yearly, and they should be entitled to good, constructive feedback.

requiring effective instruction is doable

Multiple ways of assessing that effectiveness.

There appears to have been adequate consideration of using multiple measurement tools in the evaluation of instruction.

Well intended

With regard to Principle 3, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

From past experience, I believe that administrators will be looking for a plan from MDOE that will spell out specifics of an evaluation plan and that will provide definite guidelines for professional development requirements. How do you ensure implementation of those guidelines by all?

How will student test scores and teacher effectiveness be calculated?..... over how many years? What if the student population is transient? What do we do with students who are newcomers to the US? Will it be based solely on growth? I looked at your Maine Educator Effectiveness Council Membership, and I don't see anyone on there from the Portland Education Association. Is that true, or am I mistaken? How can that be? Isn't Portland the largest school district with the most diverse population? If it is true, it's really a huge mistake.

requiring effective instruction presupposes adequately trained teachers -- clean the slate. There needs to be coordination between the universities that train teachers and schools that deliver educational models -- school systems are top heavy with superintendents, take some of that money and invest it in training for your teachers.

Again, SUPPORT. When a school finds deficiencies, what is the path to strengthening that teacher's effectiveness, strengthening that principal's success as the teacher leader? And does a district or building have options that work for their particular community?

I continue to be concerned that single-point student assessments will receive too much attention simply because they are easily accessed, and the data they provide is easy to compare.

Less emphasis on student scores as a measure of quality teaching; ignores too many other contributing factors.

With regard to Principle 3, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

The movement to a required "performance evaluation and profession growth system" is a positive move.

Good ideas.

None

An attempt to ensure professional and effective evaluation

With regard to Principle 3, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

The implementation and oversight of the teacher evaluation system should be again managed in a manner that considers the growth of the students from class to class. For example, I teach science at the high school level and many of my students have little to no science background. I teach the high school biology course beginning from the middle school level and have to bring them through the high school material. The students make gains, but I am well aware that they are not as proficient as their counterparts that enter high school biology with prior knowledge. In some ways my students gains are greater then some of the others, but in others they are still well below my desired expectations. How will this system address these scenarios. Also, similar to other states, it would be nice to have the certification and evaluation progress be accessible for staff through an online system. An example of such a system might be that used in Missouri where staff is able to report professional development and certification status online.

Schools will need to given clear professional development in order to know how to evaluate their reading and math programs and how teachers are implementing them. Reading is so critical to student achievement, yet schools seem unable to figure out why students are not learning from their programming.

We continue to waffle as a state on standards... why not use the same teaching standards across the state?

Support for good teachers ...remember Blaine House scholarships? Good professional conferences that brought best practices to Maine teachers? Funding for teachers to attend national conferences? Principal's academy? In essence, support for the GOOD educators seeking professional growth: the best teachers are active learners themselves.

With regard to Principle 3, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Starting to go in the right direction.

Some professional development for educators

The current system does need rethinking.

With regard to Principle 3, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

Recognizing those who spend many hours developing their plans and do not even get recognized more for their contributions--when this is done--teachers will even give more to their educating.

Teacher evaluation should remain at the district level

Administration needs to be held accountable for not communicating changes to all stakeholders including most important the parents.

Very little support for parents without input and decision making mechanism for including teachers in the process

As an educator, the criteria for teacher accountability seems heavy on punishments and light on rewards. The High-Performance status of schools and teachers should include pay incentives. Period. If you're going to emulate private sector hiring/firing practices, you've got to also include the rewards. My name on a website? Getting to share strategies with other schools at DOE events? Gee, can we get a t-shirt and a handshake too? You can't have it both ways. You've got the stick, now where's the carrot? Secondly, teaching is a craft. There may be a few who are born into it, or emerge from the gate as innovative, creative superstars, but for the vast majority (myself included), the first years were a steep learning curve, filled with frustration and a profound lack of guidance and support. Once again, the language here is short on resources, and long on consequences. For most teachers, their education begins the moment they step into their first classroom. This discussion should revolve around molding and keeping teachers. Is there dead weight in the system? Absolutely. My point once again is that if you're going to be pruning, you also need to be planting and watering.

With regard to Principle 3, what do you feel are the strengths of Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

??

I am glad there will be support for schools and teaching staff.

With regard to Principle 3, what's missing, unclear, or should be added to strengthen Maine's waiver request? - Open-Ended Response

I am uncertain as to whether or not the DOE has selected a research-based model other than the work of Charlotte Danielson to evaluate leadership and effective instruction. I do not believe that the majority of Maine schools are sufficient educated regarding Danielson's model.

How are evaluation systems going to be "common" throughout the State if each district is allowed to develop their own evaluation system?

I think there should be specialized training for special education students and ELL students.

It seems rather nebulous to me what is going to be used as a measure of effectiveness.

Teacher evaluations should not be tied to high-stakes testing. Teachers should be evaluated based on student growth but not through arbitrary testing. Peer review by teachers will undermine the relationship among teachers in a district.

Finally, please share any additional comments about Maine's plan for ESEA Flexibility as outlined in the draft executive summary. - Open-Ended Response

I do not see a lot of emphasis on supporting special education. Charter schools- how do they figure in this mix?

The draft executive summary is clear and reasonably well organized. The entire document, however, should be carefully proofread, since there are errors in sentence structure. These may have come about during partial deletions and re-writing. They should be corrected, since such a document as this should be a model of what we want our students to know about correct writing.

The waiver request is a good step forward. Common sense needs to prevail. Expectations need to be reasonable and attainable. Sufficient resources need to be applied to ensure success. The effects of class size need to be remembered as well. It is much easier for teachers to meet the needs of all learners in smaller classes.

Your time line appears to be flawed - one more year would give more sufficient time to develop the third part of this plan.

Standards are "standards." It is projected that special education students meet "standards" and participate in standard-based testing. Many students in special education are not able to make growth and meet standards primarily due to his/her disability. Some students are not 2 years behind in learning and, therefore, do not qualify to do a PAAP. These same students may never catch up to his/her peers; however, we expect them to meet the "standards." Where does that leave special educators?

How will the feedback being gathered with this survey and with the hearings be used? Are the hearings being well-attended, given the timeframe for the notice, and given the time of year?

SES should be eliminated. It has no effect on student NECAP scores while it drains funding from school programs.

Attachment 3

*Notice and information provided to the public
regarding the request*

MAINE PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Below, please find:

- 1) General items in our Maine DOE Newsroom about the ESEA flexibility request. These include Commissioner's blog posts and general dispatches. All of these were included in our weekly Commissioner's Update, which is distributed to nearly 3000 subscribers, including all superintendents in the State.
- 2) Three Newsroom discussion items – we invited public participation in our Newsroom discussion via the reader comments.
- 3) Press releases. All of these went out to the media, made it into the weekly Commissioner's Update, and were posted in our online Newsroom.

General Maine DOE Newsroom items

Maine residents join first forum online to discuss ESEA flexibility draft

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/08/21/esea-online-forum/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/08/21/esea-online-forum/)

Posted on August 21, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

A small group of Maine residents joined an online forum Monday night to provide Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen with feedback on the Department's draft proposal for flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

A call for ESEA flexibility feedback

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/05/31/call-for-feedback/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/05/31/call-for-feedback/)

Posted on May 31, 2012 by Commissioner Stephen Bowen

This week, in addition to the usual updates about our work, I will ask for something from you. The September 2012 deadline to request flexibility from the federal government in Maine's implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (or ...

Starting the serious work of crafting a new accountability system

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/02/13/serious-work-accountability/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/02/13/serious-work-accountability/)

Posted on February 13, 2012 by Commissioner Stephen Bowen

When we took to the road in December, we wanted to hear what the public had to say about the system we use to hold our schools accountable. And hear from the public we did. We had more than 1,500 ...

Welcome news and a special opportunity

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/09/28/welcome-news-opportunity/>>

Posted on September 28, 2011 by Commissioner Stephen Bowen

We've had a flurry of activity here at the Department of Education ever since the Obama administration last week released guidelines for states interested in securing waivers from certain provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind law.

Join statewide discussion on ESEA flexibility

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/08/20/statewide-discussion-esea/>>

Posted on August 20, 2012 by Commissioner Stephen Bowen

Well, the time has come.

For nearly the past year, we've been working on a proposal for flexibility under the decade-old No Child Left Behind Act (or Elementary and Secondary Education Act). Maine will submit its application by Sept. 6, and it's important to us to involve the public one more time as we finalize a plan for creating a better school accountability and improvement system.

Accountability and improvement work in high gear

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/05/16/accountability-high-gear/>>

Posted on May 16, 2012 by Commissioner Stephen Bowen

Our efforts to create an accountability and improvement system that works for our students, teachers and schools — and replaces the system we have under the No Child Left Behind Act — are kicking into high gear.

Bowen testimony in support of educator effectiveness bill

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/03/14/testimony-effectiveness-bill/>>

Posted on March 14, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

The Maine Legislature's Education Committee held a public hearing March 14 on legislation that takes a number of steps to ensure an effective corps of teachers and school leaders who are well prepared to enter the classroom and receive regular feedback that helps them improve their practice.

Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen delivered the following testimony supporting LD 1858, An Act to Ensure Effective Teaching and School Leadership.

Starting the serious work of crafting a new accountability system

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/02/13/serious-work-accountability/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/02/13/serious-work-accountability/)

Posted on February 13, 2012 by Commissioner Stephen Bowen

When we took to the road in December, we wanted to hear what the public had to say about the system we use to hold our schools accountable. And hear from the public we did. We had more than 1,500 people respond to an online survey; several dozen turned out at public forums in Bangor, Portland and online.

Portland forum focuses on fair, accurate assessment

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/15/portland-forum-assessment/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/15/portland-forum-assessment/)

Posted on December 15, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

PORTLAND — About 40 people turned out for a public forum at Portland Arts and Technology High School on Dec. 14 to discuss a new system for holding schools accountable, recognizing success and supporting schools in need of improvement with Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen.

Participants join online ESEA flexibility forum

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/15/online-flexibility-forum/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/15/online-flexibility-forum/)

Posted on December 15, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

A small, but engaged group of Maine residents signed into an online conference room on Dec. 13 to discuss Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility with Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen and share their ideas.

The upside of not being first

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/11/30/upside-not-first/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/11/30/upside-not-first/)

Posted on November 30, 2011 by Commissioner Stephen Bowen

Sometimes, it's OK if we're not first.

In fact, it offers Maine an advantage when it comes to preparing an application for flexibility from provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind law.

Welcome news and a special opportunity

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/09/28/welcome-news-opportunity/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/09/28/welcome-news-opportunity/)

Posted on September 28, 2011 by Commissioner Stephen Bowen

We've had a flurry of activity here at the Department of Education ever since the Obama administration last week released guidelines for states interested in securing waivers from certain provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind law.

Statement on No Child Left Behind flexibility

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/09/23/statement-nclb-flexibility/>>

Posted on September 23, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

Maine Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen released the following statement today in response to President Obama's announcement of new flexibility for states from No Child Left Behind accountability requirements:

Press Releases

Seeking public feedback on education plan

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/08/15/seeking-feedback-on-education-plan/>>

Posted on August 15, 2012 by David Connerty-Marin

AUGUSTA – The Maine Department of Education is inviting the public to weigh in one last time on its plan for creating a fairer and more constructive system for holding schools accountable and helping them improve.

Maine DOE makes plans for improved accountability

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/02/13/plans-improved-accountability/>>

Posted on February 13, 2012 by David Connerty-Marin

AUGUSTA – The education commissioners in Maine and New Hampshire sent a joint letter to Washington, D.C., today that outlines their plans to craft a thoughtful, fair and constructive system for holding their schools accountable and helping them improve. The letter ...

Maine DOE makes plans for improved accountability

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/02/13/plans-improved-accountability/>>

Posted on February 13, 2012 by David Connerty-Marin

AUGUSTA – The education commissioners in Maine and New Hampshire sent a joint letter to Washington, D.C., today that outlines their plans to craft a thoughtful, fair and constructive system for holding their schools accountable and helping them improve. The letter lays out the two states' intentions to get out from under the unfair and unrealistic No Child Left Behind accountability system, but through a deliberate and complete process that involves educators, parents and others in building an alternative.

Students seek voice in accountability

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/15/students-voice-accountability/>>

Posted on December 15, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

PORTLAND – Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen met with 10 Portland-area high school students on Dec. 14 to ask for their thoughts on school accountability and how to measure school and teacher effectiveness.

The 10 students represented Portland, Deering and Casco Bay high schools, along with Portland Arts and Technology High School and the Real School in Falmouth.

Ed Commissioner in Portland tonight; seeks ideas on school accountability, recognition

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/14/portland-accountability-recognition/>>

Posted on December 14, 2011 by David Connerty-Marin

PORTLAND — Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen will visit Portland tonight to ask the public for ideas on measuring school and teacher effectiveness, and crafting a system that holds schools accountable and rewards success.

First forum yields ideas on ESEA flexibility

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/09/forum-esea-flexibility/>>

Posted on December 9, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

BANGOR — About 45 members of the public – including teachers, administrators and school board members – attended a public forum at Bangor High School on Dec. 8 to hear from Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen about Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility and to share ideas.

Below is a summary of their comments.

Students offer thoughts on accountability

<<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/09/students-thoughts-accountability/>>

Posted on December 9, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

BANGOR — Education Commissioner Stephen Bowen met with eight students at Bangor High School on Dec. 8 to ask their thoughts on what makes for an effective school, and what makes for an effective teacher.

Ed Commissioner asks public for ideas on school accountability and recognition

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/05/ed-commissioner-asks-public-for-ideas-on-school-accountability-and-recognition/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/05/ed-commissioner-asks-public-for-ideas-on-school-accountability-and-recognition/)

Posted on December 5, 2011 by David Connerty-Marin

AUGUSTA — The federal government is offering Maine, like all other states, a chance to develop its own system of accountability and recognition of schools — allowing the state to jettison what many now consider unrealistic and unfair requirements and negative labels in the current No Child Left Behind Act.

Newsroom Discussion

Last chance for input on ESEA flexibility

Posted on August 15, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

The Maine DOE will submit a formal request for flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to the U.S. Department of Education by Sept. 6. Maine is looking to create a fairer and more constructive system for holding schools accountable and helping them improve.

Discussion, continued: Maine's request for ESEA flexibility

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/08/15/last-chance-input-esea-flexibility/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/08/15/last-chance-input-esea-flexibility/)

Posted on May 29, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

We want to hear from you.

The Maine DOE has entered the second, more earnest, phase of work developing an accountability and improvement system that's thoughtful, fair and constructive; a system that considers multiple valid measures in determining the performance of students and schools; and a system that helps struggling schools improve rather than feel stigmatized.

Discussion: Maine's request for ESEA flexibility

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/05/discussion-esea-flexibility/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/12/05/discussion-esea-flexibility/)

Posted on December 5, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

The Maine Department of Education wants to hear from you as it puts together a request to the federal government for flexibility in holding schools accountable and recognizing their success under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (commonly known as No Child Left Behind).

COMMON CORE PUBLICITY

Conferences let teachers learn from peers on Common Core

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/05/16/teachers-common-core/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/05/16/teachers-common-core/)

Posted on May 16, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

Four daylong conferences this August will offer teachers a chance to hear from fellow Maine teachers about: reasoning and higher-order thinking skills; helping students to improve their writing; improving their own writing; and effective math instruction based on the Common ...

Webinar: Common Core's implications for Social Studies

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/05/02/webinar-social-studies/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/05/02/webinar-social-studies/)

Posted on May 2, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

The Maine Department of Education's social studies specialist, Kristie Littlefield, will conduct a series of webinars on the Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, designed specifically for social studies teachers.

Literacy conference emphasizes Common Core planning

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/04/20/common-core-planning/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/04/20/common-core-planning/)

Posted on April 20, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

The Maine Department of Education's Summer Literacy Institute will bring together teams of educators to work on school and district plans for implementing the Common Core State Standards for English language arts, as well as the Common Core's literacy standards ...

Gov. LePage, Commissioner Bowen announce new education initiatives

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/02/08/new-education-initiatives/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/02/08/new-education-initiatives/)

Posted on February 8, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

The following is a press release from the Office of Gov. Paul LePage New legislation "puts students first" AUGUSTA – Governor Paul LePage unveiled his education legislative agenda on Wednesday at the Somerset Career and Technical Education Center in Skowhegan. ...

High school math teachers' session addresses Common Core, reasoning

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/01/24/common-core-reasoning/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/01/24/common-core-reasoning/)

Posted on January 24, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

The Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Maine (ATOMIM) is inviting high school math teachers to a session focused on the Common Core state standards for mathematics in the classroom through reasoning and sense making.

Curriculum group offers 2nd Common Core conference

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2012/01/18/common-core-conference/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2012/01/18/common-core-conference/)

Posted on January 18, 2012 by Maine Department of Education

Teachers, administrators and school board members will gain insight into Maine's implementation of the Common Core state standards and federal education policy during a daylong conference on Jan. 27 in Brewer.

Webinar to address research behind Common Core math

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/10/05/webinar-research-common-core/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/10/05/webinar-research-common-core/)

Posted on October 5, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

The Regional Educational Laboratory – Northeast and Islands, to which Maine belongs, will host a webinar on Oct. 6 focused on the implementation of the Common Core state standards for math.

Maine steps up Common Core standards work

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/09/12/common-core-standards/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/09/12/common-core-standards/)

Posted on September 12, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

The Maine Department of Education's content specialists are making various resources available to teachers, curriculum directors and other educators to help them implement the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Conference offered on Common Core

[<http://mainedoenews.net/2011/08/31/conference-common-core/>](http://mainedoenews.net/2011/08/31/conference-common-core/)

Posted on August 31, 2011 by Maine Department of Education

Teachers, administrators and school board members will gain insight into Maine's implementation of the Common Core state standards and federal education policy during a daylong conference on Oct. 24 in Lewiston

Attachment 4

Evidence that Maine has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with Maine's standards adoption process:

Notice of Rule Adoption with Maine Secretary of State

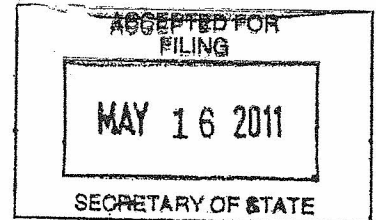
Rule-Making Cover Sheet

MAPA-1

TO: Secretary of State
ATTN: Administrative Procedure Officer,
State House Station 101, Augusta, Maine 04333.

2011-156

1. Agency: Education
2. Agency umbrella and unit number: 05-071
(2 digit umbrella # and 3 digit unit #)
3. Title of rule: The Maine Federal, State and Local Accountability Standards
4. Chapter number assigned to the rule: Chapter 131
(must be 3 digits or less)
5. Date(s)/method(s) of notice: August 11, 2010 Secretary of State Notice
6. Date(s)/place(s) of hearing(s): August 30, 2010, Cross State Office Building, Room 500,
10-12 noon
7. Type: ☐ new rule ☒ partial amendment(s) of existing rule
☐ suspension of existing rule ☐ repeal of rule emergency rule
☐ repeal and replace: complete replacement of existing chapter, with former version
simultaneously repealed.
8. Name/phone of agency contact person: Wanda Monthey, 207-624-6831,
wanda.monthey@maine.gov, Fax- 207-624-6821 / Jaci Holmes, 207-624-6669, jaci.holmes@maine.gov,
Fax 207-624-6601, Maine Department of Education, 23 State House Station, Augusta, ME, 04333-0023



9. If a major substantive rule under Title 5, c. 375, sub-CII-A, check one of the following

☐ Provisional adoption
(prior to Legislative review)

☒ Final adoption

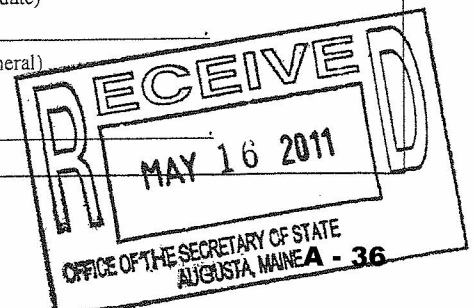
☐ emergency adoption of major-substantive rule

10. Certification Statement: I, Stephen L. Bowen hereby certify
that the attached is a true copy of the rule(s) described above and lawfully adopted by
the Maine Department of Education on 5/16/11
(name of agency) (date)
I further certify that all portions of this rule are adopted in compliance with the requirements
of the Maine Administrative Procedure Act.
Signature: (b)(6)
(original signature, personally signed by the head of agency)
Printed name & title: Stephen L. Bowen, Commissioner, Maine Department of Education

11. Approved as to form and legality by the Attorney General on 5/16/11
(date)
Signature: (b)(6)
(original signature, personally signed by an Assistant Attorney General)
Printed Name: Scott A. Foster

EFFECTIVE DATE:

JUN 15 2011



Attachment 4

Evidence that Maine has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with Maine's standards adoption process:

Common Core except from Rule Chapter 131

Chapter 131: THE MAINE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS

SUMMARY: This chapter outlines the Maine Federal, State, and Local Accountability Grade Level Expectations (GLE) pursuant to Title 20-A M.R.S.A §6202. The Maine Federal, State, and Local Accountability Grade Level Expectations define the State's content Grade Level Expectations for federal accountability. These Grade Level Expectations are described for the content areas of Mathematics, Reading, and Science. Each of the content areas is organized in one or more strands. The strands represent the subtopics within each discipline and are defined by the grade level expectations. The coding represented at the end of each GLE and included in () corresponds to code for the New England Comprehensive Assessment Program (NECAP) grade level expectation. **(The GLEs for Mathematics and Reading remain in effect through the 2011-12 school year. As of 2012-13, the College and Career Readiness Standards in Sections II-A and II-B of this document are in effect.)**

THIS IS AN EXCERPT FROM MAINE DOE RULE CHAPTER 131, INDICATING ADOPTION OF THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS IN ELA AND MATH. THE FULL TEXT OF THE RULE IS ON THE WEBPAGE OF THE MAINE SECRETARY OF STATE AT:
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/05/chaps05.htm>

Section II-A | College and Career Readiness Standards for English Language Arts – Effective 2012-2013

1. Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects K–5

1.1 College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading

The K–5 standards on the following pages define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade. They correspond to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) anchor standards below by number. The CCR and grade-specific standards are necessary complements—the former providing broad standards, the latter providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate.

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Section II-B | College and Career Readiness Standards for Mathematics – Effective 2012-2013

1. Mathematics | Kindergarten

In Kindergarten, instructional time should focus on two critical areas: (1) representing, relating, and operating on whole numbers, initially with sets of objects; (2) describing shapes and space. More learning time in Kindergarten should be devoted to number than to other topics.

(1) Students use numbers, including written numerals, to represent quantities and to solve quantitative problems, such as counting objects in a set; counting out a given number of objects; comparing sets or numerals; and modeling simple joining and separating situations with sets of objects, or eventually with equations such as $5 + 2 = 7$ and $7 - 2 = 5$. (Kindergarten students should see addition and subtraction equations, and student writing of equations in Kindergarten is encouraged, but it is not required.) Students choose, combine, and apply effective strategies for answering quantitative questions, including quickly recognizing the cardinalities of small sets of objects, counting and producing sets of given sizes, counting the number of objects in combined sets, or counting the number of objects that remain in a set after some are taken away.

(2) Students describe their physical world using geometric ideas (e.g., shape, orientation, spatial relations) and vocabulary. They identify, name, and describe basic two-dimensional shapes, such as squares, triangles, circles, rectangles, and hexagons, presented in a variety of ways (e.g., with different sizes and orientations), as well as three-dimensional shapes such as cubes, cones, cylinders, and spheres. They use basic shapes and spatial reasoning to model objects in their environment and to construct more complex shapes.

1a. Grade K Overview

Counting and Cardinality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know number names and the count sequence. • Count to tell the number of objects. • Compare numbers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. 2. Reason 	Mathematical Practices
--------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------

Operations and Algebraic Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from. 	abstractly and quantitatively.	
Number and Operations in Base Ten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with numbers 11–19 to gain foundations for place value. 	3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.	
Measurement and Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe and compare measurable attributes. Classify objects and count the number of objects in categories. 	4. Model with mathematics.	
Geometry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and describe shapes. Analyze, compare, create, and compose shapes. 	5. Use appropriate tools strategically.	
		6. Attend to precision.	
		7. Look for and make use of structure.	
		8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.	

Last Page of DOE Rule Chapter 131, indicating adoption date:

15.4 Using Probability to Make Decisions

15.4a Calculate expected values and use them to solve problems.

- (+) Define a random variable for a quantity of interest by assigning a numerical value to each event in a sample space; graph the corresponding probability distribution using the same graphical displays as for data distributions.
- (+) Calculate the expected value of a random variable; interpret it as the mean of the probability distribution.
- (+) Develop a probability distribution for a random variable defined for a sample space in which theoretical probabilities can be calculated; find the expected value. *For example, find the theoretical probability distribution for the number of correct answers obtained by guessing on all five questions of a multiple-choice test where each question has four choices, and find the expected grade under various grading schemes.*
- (+) Develop a probability distribution for a random variable defined for a sample space in which probabilities are assigned empirically; find the expected value. *For example, find a current data distribution on the number of TV sets per household in the United States, and calculate the expected number of sets per household. How many TV sets would you expect to find in 100 randomly selected households?*

15.4b Use probability to evaluate outcomes of decisions.

1. (+) Weigh the possible outcomes of a decision by assigning probabilities to payoff values and finding expected values.
 - a. Find the expected payoff for a game of chance. *For example, find the expected winnings from a state lottery ticket or a game at a fast-food restaurant.*
 - b. Evaluate and compare strategies on the basis of expected values. *For example, compare a high-deductible versus a low-deductible automobile insurance policy using various, but reasonable, chances of having a minor or a major accident.*
 2. (+) Use probabilities to make fair decisions (e.g., drawing by lots, using a random number generator).
 3. (+) Analyze decisions and strategies using probability concepts (e.g., product testing, medical testing, pulling a hockey goalie at the end of a game).
-

EFFECTIVE DATE:

August 31, 1997 – filing 97-260, major substantive: “Rules for Learning Results”

REPEALED AND REPLACED:

August 5, 2007 – filing 2007-282, major substantive: “The Maine Federal, State, and Local Accountability Standards”

AMENDED:

July 26, 2009 - filing 2009-287, major substantive

June 15, 2011 – filing 2011-156, major substantive

Attachment 4

Evidence that Maine has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with Maine's standards adoption process:

*Resolve authorizing final adoption of Chapter
131*

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

**Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Chapter 131: The
Maine Federal, State and Local Accountability Standards, a Major
Substantive Rule of the Department of Education**

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A requires legislative authorization before major substantive agency rules may be finally adopted by the agency; and

Whereas, the above-named major substantive rule has been submitted to the Legislature for review; and

Whereas, immediate enactment of this resolve is necessary to record the Legislature's position on final adoption of the rule; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1 Adoption. Resolved: That final adoption of portions of Chapter 131: The Maine Federal, State and Local Accountability Standards, a provisionally adopted major substantive rule of the Department of Education that has been submitted to the Legislature for review pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A, is authorized.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Attachment 4

Evidence that Maine has formally adopted college- and career-ready content standards consistent with Maine's standards adoption process:

Legislation authorizing Maine DOE to consider adopting Common Core standards

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Adopt the Common Core State Standards Initiative

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, national education reform includes the so-called "Common Core State Standards Initiative" standards for kindergarten to grade 12, which are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation; and

Whereas, Maine's current system of learning results established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20A, section 6209, and its system of assessment, do not include the Common Core State Standards Initiative standards; and

Whereas, immediate enactment of this legislation is necessary to ensure the State's eligibility to apply for a significant amount of federal funding for continued education reform, which is jeopardized by significant and continuing reductions in state funding for education; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §6209, first ¶, as corrected by RR 2007, c. 1, §8, is amended to read:

The department in consultation with the state board shall establish and implement a comprehensive, statewide system of learning results, which may include a core of standards in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten to grade 12 established in common with the other states, as set forth in this section and in department rules implementing this section and other curricular requirements. The department must establish accountability standards at all grade levels in the areas of mathematics; reading; and science and technology. The department shall establish parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements in English language arts; mathematics; science and technology; social studies; career and education development; visual and performing arts; health, physical education and wellness; and world languages. Only students in a public school or a private school approved for tuition that enrolls at least 60% publicly funded students, as determined by the previous school year's October and April average enrollment, are required to participate in the system of learning results set forth in this section and in department rules implementing this section and other curricular requirements. The commissioner shall develop accommodation provisions for instances where course content conflicts with sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of a student's parent or guardian. The system must be adapted to accommodate children with disabilities as defined in section 7001, subsection 1-A.

Sec. 2. Emergency rulemaking. In accordance with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 8054, the Commissioner of Education may adopt emergency rules to include in the statewide system of learning results and assessment a core of standards in English language arts and mathematics for kindergarten to grade 12 established in common with the other states.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

Effective July 12, 2010

Attachment 5

*Memorandum of understanding or letter from
Maine's network of institutions of higher
education certifying that meeting Maine's
standards corresponds to being college- and career-
ready without the need for remedial coursework at
the postsecondary level*

MAINE MARITIME ACADEMY

CASTINE, MAINE 04420

207 / 826-2220

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 7, 2010

Carol Whang
WestEd
730 Harrison Street
San Francisco, CA 94107-1242

RE: Letter of Intent for Institutes of Higher Education
SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium
Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment
Systems Grant Application
CFDA Number: 84.395B

Dear Ms. Whang:

It is the intent of Maine Maritime Academy to participate in the following:

- a. Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium's final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
- b. Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented, that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the Institution of Higher Education of Institution of Higher Education System.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this initiative.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

John Barlow
V.P. For Academic Affairs

Enc.

ME-1

(b) Total Number of Direct Matriculation Students (as defined in the NIA) in the Partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 School Year

Note: NIA defines direct matriculation student as a student who entered college as a freshman within two years of graduating from high school

State	Name of Participating IHEs	Number of Direct Matriculation Students in IHE in 2008-2009	Total Direct Matriculation Students in State in 2008-2009
MAINE	MAINE MARITIME ACADEMY	566	

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

IHE or IHE system SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.

Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:

- (a) Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium's final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
- (b) Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented, that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.

State Name:

MAINE

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name):

Telephone:

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

Date:

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

Telephone:

John Barlow, Maine Maritime Academy

(207) 326-2371

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

Date:

(b)(6)

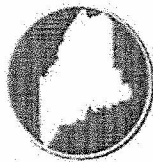
6/8/10

May 14, 2010

(b)(6)

3

ME-3



Maine's
Public
Universities

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

May 17, 2010

Office of the Chancellor
16 Central Street
Bangor, ME 04401-5106

Tel: 207-973-3205
Fax: 207-973-3221
TDD/TTY: 207-973-3262
www.maine.edu

The Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

The University of Maine
University of Maine
at Augusta
University of Maine
at Farmington
University of Maine
at Fort Kent
University of Maine
at Machias
University of Maine
at Presque Isle
University of
Southern Maine

As Chancellor of the University of Maine System, I am writing to express support for the educational goals that Maine's Governor John Baldacci and our Department of Education have put forward for the schools of our state. These goals are the foundation of Maine's Race To The Top application, and they will transform teaching and learning in Maine for years to come.

Several elements of Maine's Race To The Top application will strengthen our ability to create learning environments in which all of Maine's students have the opportunity to realize their full potential. Maine's plan will:

- Strengthen and expand quality standards and assessments for teaching and learning by implementing a balanced assessment system of learning and for learning that informs instructional practice, while providing support structures for all students to achieve the standards;
- Implement and use longitudinal data systems to support teaching and learning by measuring student growth and informing instruction;
- Support mentoring for teachers and leaders to create the personal journey required for the success of next generation learners; and
- Improve student achievement through whole school improvement of all schools, especially those recognized as previously low-performing.

The Race To The Top grant program presents a great opportunity for the State of Maine and its students. An educational reform effort of this magnitude needs strong partnerships among educators, parents, students, administrators, local school boards, community leaders, and State policy makers. The Maine Department of Education is committed to this essential work and the University of Maine System looks forward to our continued partnership with the Department as we prepare our students for successful careers and citizenship.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Richard L. Pattenau
Chancellor, University of Maine System

cc: Governor John Baldacci
Senator Susan Collins
Senator Olympia Snowe

ME-4

(b) Total Number of Direct Matriculation Students (as defined in the NIA) in the Partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 School Year

Note: NIA defines direct matriculation student as a student who entered college as a freshman within two years of graduating from high school

State	Name of Participating IHEs	Number of Direct Matriculation Students in IHE in 2008-2009	Total Direct Matriculation Students in State in 2008-2009

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

IHE or IHE system SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.

Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:

- (a) Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium's final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
- (b) Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented, that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.

State Name:

Maine

State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name): Richard L. Pattenade, Chancellor

University of Maine System

16 Central Street, Bangor, ME 04401

Telephone:

207-973-3205

Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:

(b)(6)

Date:

June 8, 2010

President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):

Telephone:

Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:

Date:

Letter of Intent for Institutes of Higher Education

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

**Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment
Systems Grant Application**

CFDA Number: 84.395B

The purpose of this Letter of Intent is to

- (a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system,
- (b) Identify the total number of direct matriculation students in the partner IHE or IHE system in the 2008–2009 school year, and
- (c) Commit the State's higher education executive officer (if the State has one) and the president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system through signature blocks.

(a) Detail the responsibilities of the IHE or IHE system

Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:

1. Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium's final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and
2. Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.

(c) Partner IHE or IHE System Signature Blocks

IHE or IHE system SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application.	
Each IHE or IHE system commits to the following agreements:	
<p>(a) Participation with the Consortium in the design and development of the Consortium's final high school summative assessments in mathematics and English language arts in order to ensure that the assessments measure college readiness; and</p> <p>(b) Implementation of policies, once the final high school summative assessments are implemented, that exempt from remedial courses and place into credit-bearing college courses any student who meets the Consortium-adopted achievement standard (as defined in the NIA) for each assessment and any other placement requirement established by the IHE or IHE system.</p>	
State Name:	
Maine	
State's higher education executive officer, if State has one (Printed Name):	Telephone:
Signature State's higher education executive officer, if State has one:	Date:
President or head of each participating IHE or IHE system, (Printed Name):	Telephone:
JOHN FITZSIMMONS, SYSTEM PRESIDENT MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM	207-629-4000
Signature of president or head of each participating IHE or IHE system:	Date:
(b)(6)	6/9/10

Attachment 6

Maine's Race to the Top Assessment Memorandum of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program: Comprehensive Assessment
Systems Grant Application

CFDA Number: 84.395B

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered as of May 26, 2010, by and between the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (the "Consortium") and the State of Maine, which has elected to participate in the Consortium as (check one)

☐ An Advisory State (description in section e),

OR

☒ A Governing State (description in section e),

pursuant to the Notice Inviting Applications for the Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program for the Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application (Category A), henceforth referred to as the "Program," as published in the Federal Register on April 9, 2010 (75 FR 18171-18185).

The purpose of this MOU is to

- (a) Describe the Consortium vision and principles,
- (b) Detail the responsibilities of States in the Consortium,
- (c) Detail the responsibilities of the Consortium,
- (d) Describe the management of Consortium funds,
- (e) Describe the governance structure and activities of States in the Consortium,
- (f) Describe State entrance, exit, and status change,
- (g) Describe a plan for identifying existing State barriers, and
- (h) Bind each State in the Consortium to every statement and assurance made in the application through the following signature blocks:

(i)(A) Advisory State Assurance

OR

(i)(B) Governing State Assurance

AND

(ii) State Procurement Officer

(a) Consortium Vision and Principles

The Consortium's priorities for a new generation assessment system are rooted in a concern for the valid, reliable, and fair assessment of the deep disciplinary understanding and higher-order thinking skills that are increasingly demanded by a knowledge-based economy. These priorities are also rooted in a belief that assessment must support ongoing improvements in instruction and learning, and must be useful for all members of the educational enterprise: students, parents, teachers, school administrators, members of the public, and policymakers.

The Consortium intends to build a flexible system of assessment based upon the Common Core Standards in English language arts and mathematics with the intent that all students across this Consortium of States will know their progress toward college and career readiness.

The Consortium recognizes the need for a system of formative, interim, and summative assessments—organized around the Common Core Standards—that support high-quality learning, the demands of accountability, and that balance concerns for innovative assessment with the need for a fiscally sustainable system that is feasible to implement. The efforts of the Consortium will be organized to accomplish these goals.

The comprehensive assessment system developed by the Consortium will include the following key elements and principles:

1. A Comprehensive Assessment System that will be grounded in a thoughtfully integrated learning system of standards, curriculum, assessment, instruction and teacher development that will inform decision-making by including formative strategies, interim assessments, and summative assessments.
2. The assessment system will measure the full range of the Common Core Standards including those that measure higher-order skills and will inform progress toward and acquisition of readiness for higher education and multiple work domains. The system will emphasize deep knowledge of core concepts within and across the disciplines, problem solving, analysis, synthesis, and critical thinking.
3. Teachers will be involved in the design, development, and scoring of assessment items and tasks. Teachers will participate in the alignment of the Common Core Standards and the identification of the standards in the local curriculum.
4. Technology will be used to enable adaptive technologies to better measure student abilities across the full spectrum of student performance and evaluate growth in learning; to support online simulation tasks that test higher-order abilities; to score the results; and to deliver the responses to trained scorers/teachers to access from an

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

electronic platform. Technology applications will be designed to maximize interoperability across user platforms, and will utilize open-source development to the greatest extent possible.

5. A sophisticated design will yield scores to support evaluations of student growth, as well as school, teacher, and principal effectiveness in an efficient manner.
6. On-demand and curriculum-embedded assessments will be incorporated over time to allow teachers to see where students are on multiple dimensions of learning and to strategically support their progress.
7. All components of the system will incorporate principles of Universal Design that seek to remove construct-irrelevant aspects of tasks that could increase barriers for non-native English speakers and students with other specific learning needs.
8. Optional components will allow States flexibility to meet their individual needs.

(b) Responsibilities of States in the Consortium

Each State agrees to the following element of the Consortium's Assessment System:

- Adopt the Common Core Standards, which are college- and career-ready standards, and to which the Consortium's assessment system will be aligned, no later than December 31, 2011.

Each State that is a member of the Consortium in 2014–2015 also agrees to the following:

- Adopt common achievement standards no later than the 2014–2015 school year,
- Fully implement statewide the Consortium summative assessment in grades 3–8 and high school for both mathematics and English language arts no later than the 2014–2015 school year,
- Adhere to the governance as outlined in this document,
- Agree to support the decisions of the Consortium,
- Agree to follow agreed-upon timelines,
- Be willing to participate in the decision-making process and, if a Governing State, final decision, and
- Identify and implement a plan to address barriers in State law, statute, regulation, or policy to implementing the proposed assessment system and to addressing any such barriers prior to full implementation of the summative assessment components of the system.

(c) Responsibilities of the Consortium

The Consortium will provide the following by the 2014-15 school year:

1. A comprehensively designed assessment system that includes a strategic use of a variety of item types and performance assessments of modest scope to assess the full range of the Common Core Standards with an emphasis on problem solving, analysis, synthesis, and critical thinking.
2. An assessment system that incorporates a required summative assessment with optional formative/benchmark components which provides accurate assessment of all students (as defined in the Federal notice) including students with disabilities, English learners, and low- and high-performing students.
3. Except as described above, a summative assessment that will be administered as a computer adaptive assessment and include a minimum of 1–2 performance assessments of modest scope.
4. Psychometrically sound scaling and equating procedures based on a combination of objectively scored items, constructed-response items, and a modest number of performance tasks of limited scope (e.g., no more than a few days to complete).
5. Reliable, valid, and fair scores for students and groups that can be used to evaluate student achievement and year-to-year growth; determine school/district/state effectiveness for Title I ESEA; and better understand the effectiveness and professional development needs of teachers and principals.
6. Achievement standards and achievement level descriptors that are internationally benchmarked.
7. Access for the State or its authorized delegate to a secure item and task bank that includes psychometric attributes required to score the assessment in a comparable manner with other State members, and access to other applications determined to be essential to the implementation of the system.
8. Online administration with limited support for paper-and-pencil administration through the end of the 2016–17 school year. States using the paper-and-pencil option will be responsible for any unique costs associated with the development and administration of the paper-and-pencil assessments.

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

9. Formative assessment tools and supports that are developed to support curricular goals, which include learning progressions, and that link evidence of student competencies to the summative system.
10. Professional development focused on curriculum and lesson development as well as scoring and examination of student work.
11. A representative governance structure that ensures a strong voice for State administrators, policymakers, school practitioners, and technical advisors to ensure an optimum balance of assessment quality, efficiency, costs, and time. The governance body will be responsible for implementing plans that are consistent with this MOU, but may make changes as necessary through a formal adoption process.
12. Through at least the 2013–14 school year, a Project Management Partner (PMP) that will manage the logistics and planning on behalf of the Consortium and that will monitor for the U.S. Department of Education the progress of deliverables of the proposal. The proposed PMP will be identified no later than August 4, 2010.
13. By September 1, 2014, a financial plan will be approved by the Governing States that will ensure the Consortium is efficient, effective, and sustainable. The plan will include as revenue at a minimum, State contributions, federal grants, and private donations and fees to non-State members as allowable by the U.S. Department of Education.
14. A consolidated data reporting system that enhances parent, student, teacher, principal, district, and State understanding of student progress toward college- and career-readiness.
15. Throughout the 2013–14 school year, access to an online test administration application, student constructed-response scoring application and secure test administration browsers that can be used by the Total State Membership to administer the assessment. The Consortium will procure resources necessary to develop and field test the system. However, States will be responsible for any hardware and vendor services necessary to implement the operational assessment. Based on a review of options and the finance plan, the Consortium may elect to jointly procure these services on behalf of the Total State Membership.

(d) Management of Consortium Funds

All financial activities will be governed by the laws and rules of the State of Washington, acting in the role of Lead Procurement State/Lead State, and in accordance with 34 CFR 80.36. Additionally, Washington is prepared to follow the guidelines for grant management associated with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and will be legally responsible for the use of grant funds and for ensuring that the project is carried out by the Consortium in accordance with Federal requirements. Washington has already established an ARRA Quarterly reporting system (also referred to as *1512 Reporting*).

Per Washington statute, the basis of how funding management actually transpires is dictated by the method of grant dollar allocation, whether upfront distribution or pay-out linked to actual reimbursables. Washington functions under the latter format, generating claims against grant funds based on qualifying reimbursables submitted on behalf of staff or clients, physical purchases, or contracted services. Washington's role as Lead Procurement State/Lead State for the Consortium is not viewed any differently, as monetary exchanges will be executed against appropriate and qualifying reimbursables aligned to expenditure arrangements (i.e., contracts) made with vendors or contractors operating under "personal service contracts," whether individuals, private companies, government agencies, or educational institutions.

Washington, like most States, is audited regularly by the federal government for the accountability of federal grant funds, and has for the past five years been without an audit finding. Even with the additional potential for review and scrutiny associated with ARRA funding, Washington has its fiscal monitoring and control systems in place to manage the Consortium needs.

- As part of a comprehensive system of fiscal management, Washington's accounting practices are stipulated in the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) managed by the State's Office of Financial Management. The SAAM provides details and administrative procedures required of all Washington State agencies for the procurement of goods and services. As such, the State's educational agency is required to follow the SAAM; actions taken to manage the fiscal activities of the Consortium will, likewise, adhere to policies and procedures outlined in the SAAM.
- For information on the associated contracting rules that Washington will adhere to while serving as fiscal agent on behalf of the Consortium, refer to the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 39.29 "Personal Service Contracts." Regulations and policies authorized by this RCW are established by the State's Office of Financial Management, and can be found in the SAAM.

(e) Governance Structure and Activities of States in the Consortium

As shown in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium governance structure, the Total State Membership of the Consortium includes Governing and Advisory States, with Washington serving in the role of Lead Procurement State/Lead State on behalf of the Consortium.

A Governing State is a State that:

- Has fully committed to this Consortium only and met the qualifications specified in this document,
- Is a member of only one Consortium applying for a grant in the Program,
- Has an active role in policy decision-making for the Consortium,
- Provides a representative to serve on the Steering Committee,
- Provides a representative(s) to serve on one or more Work Groups,
- Approves the Steering Committee Members and the Executive Committee Members,
- Participates in the final decision-making of the following:
 - Changes in Governance and other official documents,
 - Specific Design elements, and
 - Other issues that may arise.

An Advisory State is a State that:

- Has not fully committed to any Consortium but supports the work of this Consortium,
- Participates in all Consortium activities but does not have a vote unless the Steering Committee deems it beneficial to gather input on decisions or chooses to have the Total Membership vote on an issue,
- May contribute to policy, logistical, and implementation discussions that are necessary to fully operationalize the SMARTER Balanced Assessment System, and
- Is encouraged to participate in the Work Groups.

Organizational Structure

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is comprised of one representative from each Governing State in the Consortium. Committee members may be a chief or his/her designee. Steering Committee Members must meet the following criteria:

- Be from a Governing State,
- Have prior experience in either the design or implementation of curriculum and/or assessment systems at the policy or implementation level, and
- Must have willingness to serve as the liaison between the Total State Membership and Working Groups.

Steering Committee Responsibilities

- Determine the broad picture of what the assessment system will look like,

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

- Receive regular reports from the Project Management Partner, the Policy Coordinator, and the Content Advisor,
- Determine the issues to be presented to the Governing and/or Advisory States,
- Oversee the expenditure of funds in collaboration with the Lead Procurement State/Lead State,
- Operationalize the plan to transition from the proposal governance to implementation governance, and
- Evaluate and recommend successful contract proposals for approval by the Lead Procurement State/Lead State.

Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee is made up of the Co-Chairs of the Executive Committee, a representative from the Lead Procurement State/Lead State, a representative from higher education and one representative each from four Governing States. The four Governing State representatives will be selected by the Steering Committee. The Higher Education representative will be selected by the Higher Education Advisory Group, as defined in the Consortium Governance document.
- For the first year, the Steering Committee will vote on four representatives, one each from four Governing States. The two representatives with the most votes will serve for three years and the two representatives with the second highest votes will serve for two years. This process will allow for the rotation of two new representatives each year. If an individual is unable to complete the full term of office, then the above process will occur to choose an individual to serve for the remainder of the term of office.

Executive Committee Responsibilities

- Oversee development of SMARTER Balanced Comprehensive Assessment System,
- Provide oversight of the Project Management Partner,
- Provide oversight of the Policy Coordinator,
- Provide oversight of the Lead Procurement State/Lead State,
- Work with project staff to develop agendas,
- Resolve issues,
- Determine what issues/decisions are presented to the Steering Committee, Advisory and/or Governing States for decisions/votes,
- Oversee the expenditure of funds, in collaboration with the Lead Procurement State/Lead State, and
- Receive and act on special and regular reports from the Project Management Partner, the Policy Coordinator, the Content Advisor, and the Lead Procurement State/Lead State.

Executive Committee Co-Chairs

- Two Co-chairs will be selected from the Steering Committee States. The two Co-chairs must be from two different states. Co-chairs will work closely with the Project Management Partner. Steering Committee members wishing to serve as Executive Committee Co-chairs will submit in writing to the Project Management Partner their willingness to serve. They will need to provide a document signed by their State Chief indicating State support for this role. The Project Management Partner will then prepare a ballot of interested individuals. Each Steering Committee member will vote on the two individuals they wish to serve as Co-chair. The individual with the most votes will serve as the new Co-chair.
- Each Co-chair will serve for two years on a rotating basis. For the first year, the Steering committee will vote on two individuals and the one individual with the most votes will serve a three-year term and the individual with the second highest number of votes will serve a two-year term.
- If an individual is unable to complete the full term of office, then the above process will occur to choose an individual to serve for the remainder of the term of office.

Executive Committee Co-Chair Responsibilities

- Set the Steering Committee agendas,
- Set the Executive Committee agenda,
- Lead the Executive Committee meetings,
- Lead the Steering Committee meetings,
- Oversee the work of the Executive Committee,
- Oversee the work of the Steering Committee,
- Coordinate with the Project Management Partner,
- Coordinate with Content Advisor,
- Coordinate with Policy coordinator,
- Coordinate with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and
- Coordinate with Executive Committee to provide oversight to the Consortium.

Decision-making

Consensus will be the goal of all decisions. Major decisions that do not reach consensus will go to a simple majority vote. The Steering Committee will determine what issues will be referred to the Total State Membership. Each member of each group (Advisory/Governing States, Steering Committee, Executive Committee) will have one vote when votes are conducted within each group. If there is only a one to three vote difference, the issue will be re-examined to seek greater consensus. The Steering Committee will be responsible for preparing additional information as to the pros and cons of the issue to assist voting States in developing consensus and reaching a final decision. The Steering Committee may delegate this responsibility to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will decide which decisions or issues are votes to

be taken to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee makes the decision to take issues to the full Membership for a vote.

The Steering Committee and the Governance/Finance work group will collaborate with each Work Group to determine the hierarchy of the decision-making by each group in the organizational structure.

Work Groups

The Work Groups are comprised of chiefs, assessment directors, assessment staff, curriculum specialists, professional development specialists, technical advisors and other specialists as needed from States. Participation on a workgroup will require varying amounts of time depending on the task. Individuals interested in participating on a Work Group should submit their request in writing to the Project Management Partner indicating their preferred subgroup. All Governing States are asked to commit to one or more Work Groups based on skills, expertise, and interest within the State to maximize contributions and distribute expertise and responsibilities efficiently and effectively. The Consortium has established the following Work Groups:

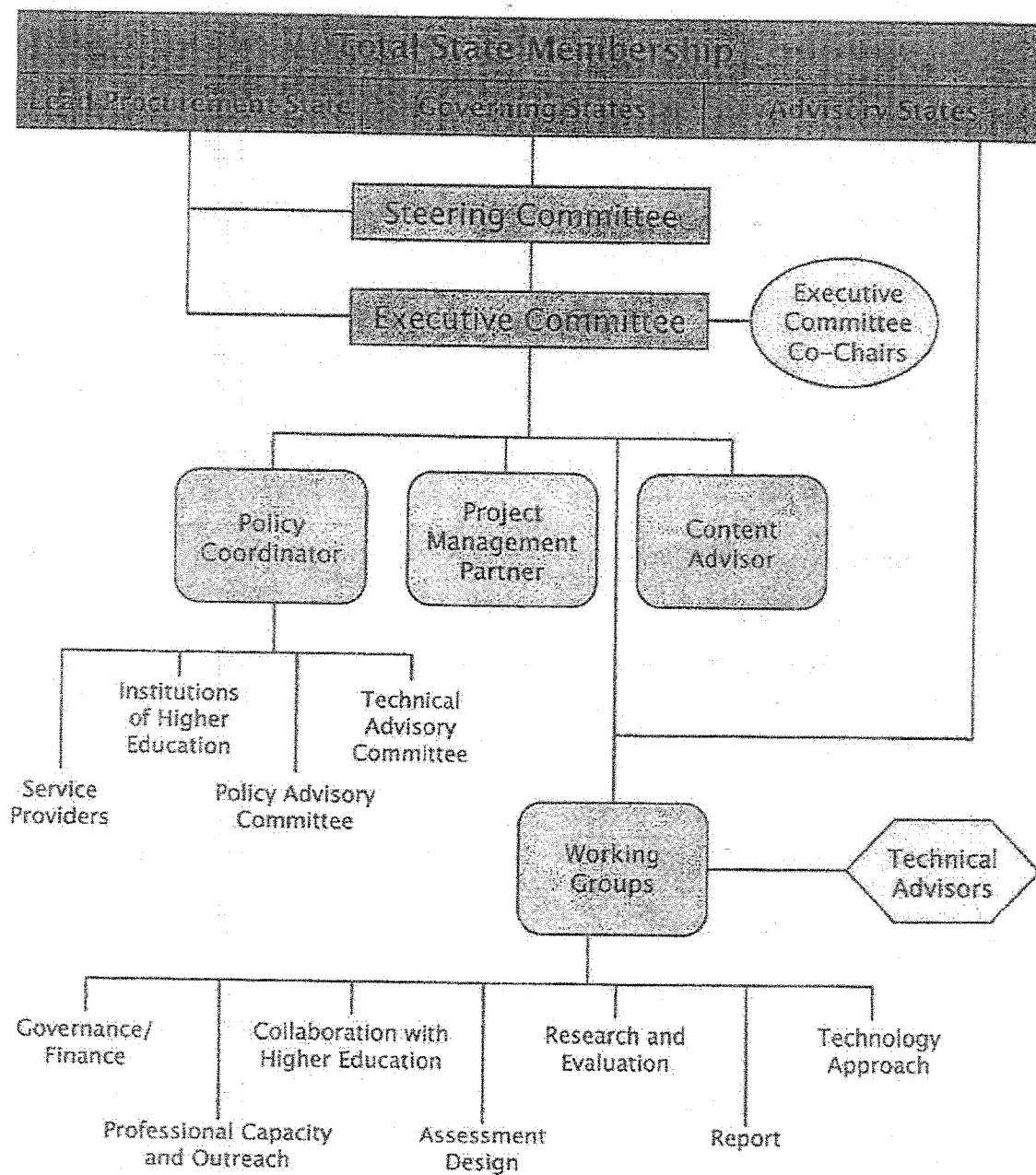
- Governance/Finance,
- Assessment Design,
- Research and Evaluation,
- Report,
- Technology Approach,
- Professional Capacity and Outreach, and
- Collaboration with Higher Education.

The Consortium will also support the work of the Work Groups through a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Policy Coordinator in collaboration with the Steering Committee will create various groups as needed to advise the Steering Committee and the Total State Membership. Initial groups will include

- Institutions of Higher Education,
- Technical Advisory Committee,
- Policy Advisory Committee, and
- Service Providers.

An organizational chart showing the groups described above is provided on the next page.

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Organizational Structure



(f) State Entrance, Exit, and Status Change

This MOU shall become effective as of the date first written above upon signature by both the Consortium and the Lead Procurement State/Lead State (Washington) and remain in force until the conclusion of the Program, unless terminated earlier in writing by the Consortium as set forth below.

Entrance into Consortium

Entrance into the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is assured when:

- The level of membership is declared and signatures are secured on the MOU from the State's Commissioner, State Superintendent, or Chief; Governor; and President/Chair of the State Board of Education (if the State has one);
- The signed MOU is submitted to the Consortium Grant Project Manager (until June 23) and then the Project Management Partner after August 4, 2010;
- The Advisory and Governing States agree to and adhere to the requirements of the governance;
- The State's Chief Procurement Officer has reviewed its applicable procurement rules and provided assurance that it may participate in and make procurements through the Consortium;
- The State is committed to implement a plan to identify any existing barriers in State law, statute, regulation, or policy to implementing the proposed assessment system and to addressing any such barriers prior to full implementation of the summative assessment components of the system; and
- The State agrees to support all decisions made prior to the State joining the Consortium.

After receipt of the grant award, any request for entrance into the Consortium must be approved by the Executive Committee. Upon approval, the Project Management Partner will then submit a change of membership to the USED for approval. A State may begin participating in the decision-making process after receipt of the MOU.

Exit from Consortium

Any State may leave the Consortium without cause, but must comply with the following exit process:

- A State requesting an exit from the Consortium must submit in writing their request and reasons for the exit request,
- The written explanation must include the statutory or policy reasons for the exit,
- The written request must be submitted to the Project Management Partner with the same signatures as required for the MOU,
- The Executive Committee will act upon the request within a week of the request, and
- Upon approval of the request, the Project Management Partner will then submit a change of membership to the USED for approval.

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

Changing Roles in the Consortium

A State desiring to change from an Advisory State to a Governing State or from a Governing State to an Advisory State may do so under the following conditions:

- A State requesting a role change in the Consortium must submit in writing their request and reasons for the request,
- The written request must be submitted to the Project Management Partner with the same signatures as required for the MOU, and
- The Executive Committee will act upon the request within a week of the request and submit to the USED for approval.

(g) Plan for Identifying Existing State Barriers

Each State agrees to identify existing barriers in State laws, statutes, regulations, or policies by noting the barrier and the plan to remove the barrier. Each State agrees to use the table below as a planning tool for identifying existing barriers. States may choose to include any known barriers in the table below at the time of signing this MOU.

Barrier	Issue/Risk of Issue (if known)	Statute, Regulation, or Policy	Governing Body with Authority to Remove Barrier	Approximate Date to Initiate Action	Target Date for Removal of Barrier	Comments

[remainder of page intentionally left blank]

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

- (h) Bind each State in the Consortium to every statement and assurance made in the application through the following signature blocks

<p>(h)(i)(A) ADVISORY STATE SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application Assurances.</p> <p><i>(Required from all "Advisory States" in the Consortium.)</i></p> <p>As an <u>Advisory State</u> in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, I have read and understand the roles and responsibilities of Advisory States, and agree to be bound by the statements and assurances made in the application.</p>	
<p>State Name: Maine</p>	
<p>Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):</p> <p>John E. Baldacci</p>	<p>Telephone:</p> <p>207-287-3531</p>
<p>Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>Chief State School Officer (Printed Name):</p> <p>Angela Faherty, Acting Commissioner</p>	<p>Telephone:</p> <p>207-624-6620</p>
<p>Signature of the Chief State School Officer:</p>	<p>Date:</p>
<p>President of the State Board of Education, if applicable (Printed Name):</p> <p>Ann I. Weisleder, Chair</p>	<p>Telephone:</p> <p>207-947-2822</p>
<p>Signature of the President of the State Board of Education, if applicable:</p>	<p>Date:</p>

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

<p>(h)(1)(B) GOVERNING STATE SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application Assurances</p> <p><i>(Required from all "Governing States" in the Consortium.)</i></p> <p>As a <u>Governing State</u> in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, I have read and understand the roles and responsibilities of Governing States, and agree to be bound by the statements and assurances made in the application.</p> <p>I further certify that as a Governing State I am fully committed to the application and will support its implementation.</p>	
<p>State Name: Maine</p>	
<p>Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):</p> <p>John E. Baldacci</p>	<p>Telephone:</p> <p>207-287-3531</p>
<p>Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:</p> <p>(b)(6)</p>	<p>Date:</p> <p>6/3/10</p>
<p>Chief State School Officer (Printed Name):</p> <p>Angela Faherty, Acting Commissioner</p>	<p>Telephone:</p> <p>207-624-6620</p>
<p>Signature of the Chief State School Officer:</p> <p>(b)(6)</p>	<p>Date:</p> <p>5-26-2010</p>
<p>President of the State Board of Education, if applicable (Printed Name):</p> <p>Ann I. Weisleder, Chair</p>	<p>Telephone:</p> <p>207-947-2822</p>
<p>Signature of the President of the State Board of Education, if applicable:</p> <p>(b)(6)</p>	<p>Date:</p> <p>6-9-2010</p>

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium MOU

<p>(h)(ii) STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICER SIGNATURE BLOCK for Race to the Top Fund Assessment Program Comprehensive Assessment Systems Grant Application Assurances.</p> <p><i>(Required from <u>all States</u> in the Consortium.)</i></p> <p>I certify that I have reviewed the applicable procurement rules for my State and have determined that it may participate in and make procurements through the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium.</p>	
<p>State Name: Maine</p>	
<p>State's chief procurement official (or designee), (Printed Name):</p> <p>Betty M. Lamoreau</p>	<p>Telephone:</p> <p>207-624-7340</p>
<p>Signature of State's chief procurement official (or designee),:</p> <p>(b)(6)</p>	<p>Date:</p> <p>6/4/10</p>

STATE

 STATUS ☐ Governing ☐ Advisory

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is one of two multistate consortia awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop an **assessment system based on the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS)**. To achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, SBAC is committed to ensuring that assessment and instruction embody the CCSS and that all students, regardless of disability, language, or subgroup status, have the opportunity to learn this valued content and show what they know and can do.

With strong support from participating states, institutions of higher education, and industry, SBAC will develop a balanced set of measures and tools, each designed to serve specific purposes. Together, these components will provide student data throughout the academic year that will inform instruction, guide interventions, help target professional development, and ensure an accurate measure of each student's progress toward career and college readiness.

The core components of SBAC are:

Summative assessments:

- Mandatory comprehensive accountability measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered in the last 12 weeks of the school year in grades 3–8 and high school for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics;
- Designed to provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of students' progress toward and attainment of the knowledge and skills required to be college and career ready;
- Capitalize on the strengths of computer adaptive testing, i.e., efficient and precise measurement across the full range of achievement and quick turnaround of results;
- Produce composite content area scores, based on the computer-adaptive items and performance tasks.

Interim assessments:

- Optional comprehensive and content-cluster measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered at locally determined intervals;
- Designed as item sets that can provide actionable information about student progress;
- Serve as the source for interpretive guides that use publicly released items and tasks;
- Grounded in cognitive development theory about how learning progresses across grades and how college- and career-readiness emerge over time;
- Involve a large teacher role in developing and scoring constructed response items and performance tasks;
- Afford teachers and administrators the flexibility to:
 - select item sets that provide deep, focused measurement of specific content clusters embedded in the CCSS;
 - administer these assessments at strategic points in the instructional year;
 - use results to better understand students' strengths and limitations in relation to the standards;
 - support state-level accountability systems using end-of-course assessments.

System Features

- Ensures coverage of the full range of ELA and mathematics standards and breadth of achievement levels by combining a variety of item types (i.e., selected-response, constructed response, and technology-enhanced) and performance tasks, which require application of knowledge and skills.
- Provides comprehensive, research-based support, technical assistance, and professional development so that teachers can use assessment data to improve teaching and learning in line with the standards.
- Provides online, tailored reports that link to instructional and professional development resources.

Formative tools and processes:

- Provides resources for teachers on how to collect and use information about student success in acquisition of the CCSS;
- Will be used by teachers and students to diagnose a student's learning needs, check for misconceptions, and/or to provide evidence of progress toward learning goals.

Attachment 8

A copy of the average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011-12 school year in reading/ language arts and mathematics for the “all students” group and all subgroups

Attachment Label 8. Average statewide proficiency based on assessments administered in the 2011-2012 school year in reading/language arts and mathematics for the “all students” and all

2012 NECAP Reading Results-Disaggregated (Grades 3-8)	
Group	% Proficient
Whole	71.77%
Race	
Am Indian	58.25%
Asian	75.59%
Black	46.85%
Hispanic	64.57%
Native Hawaiian	78.75%
White	72.73%
Multi-Other	70.41%
LEP	41.06%
IEP	29.37%
SES	60.26%

2012 NECAP Math Results – Disaggregated (Grade 11)	
Group	% Proficient
Whole	63.07%
Race	
Am Indian	50.60%
Asian	69.43%
Black	33.28%
Hispanic	50.68%
Native Hawaiian	72.50%
White	64.25%
Multi-Other	60.57%
LEP	31.00%
IEP	25.39%
SES	49.44%

2011 MHSA Reading Results-Disaggregated (Grade 3-8)		
Group		% Proficient
Whole		46.23%
Race		
Am Indian		34.95%
Asian		51.81%
Black		22.32%
Hispanic		45.03%
Native Hawaiian		*
White		50.78%
Multi-Other		40.32%
LEP		*
IEP		12.14%
SES		33.41%

2011 MHSA Math Results – Disaggregated (Grade 11)		
Group		% Proficient
Whole		50.38%
Race		
Am Indian		32.35%
Asian		62.65%
Black		19.82%
Hispanic		35.10%
Native Hawaiian		*
White		49.72%
Multi-Other		37.10%
LEP		11.90%
IEP		9.57%
SES		30.64%

Attachment 9

Table 2: Reward, Priority, and Focus Schools

List of High-Performance Reward Schools (15 schools)

LEA Name	School Name	School NECES ID #	School Type	SAI
			HS	100.00
			Elem	98.18
			Elem	96.80
			Elem	94.50
			Elem	94.50
			Elem	93.51
			Elem	93.44
			Elem	92.87
			Elem	92.74
			Elem	92.72
			Elem	92.28
			Elem	91.45
			Elem	91.11
			Elem	90.92
			Elem	90.66

List of High-Progress Reward Schools (39 schools)

LEA Name	School Name	School NECES ID #	School Type
			4YO-5
			9-12
			4YO-3
			K-4
			K-8
			K-5
			K-2
			K-4
			K-6
			4YO-8
			K-5
			4YO-3
			K-4
			K-5
			1-3
			4YO-5
			4YO-5
			K-5
			K-5
			4YO-8
			3-5
			4YO-6
			K-5
			4YO-5
			K-4
			K-4
			K-8
			4YO-6
			4YO-6

LEA Name	School Name	School NECES ID #	School Type
			4YO-5
			4YO-8
			4YO-5
			K-8
			4YO-8
			4YO-8
			4YO-8
			4YO-5
			4YO-12
			4YO-4

List of Priority (19 schools)

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES #	School Type	SAI % 4YrACGR
			Elem	44.43
			Elem	50.41
			Elem	54.62
			Elem	54.71
			Elem	54.83
			Elem	55.48
			Elem	56.03
			Elem	57.55
			HS	57.66
			Elem	58.87
			Elem	59.80
			Elem	60.07
			Elem	60.41
			Elem	60.49
			Elem	60.80
			Elem	SIG
			Elem	SIG
			HS	SIG
			HS	SIG

List of Focus Schools (39 schools)

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES #	School Type	Gap Area	Index**
			5-8	Both	50.77
			6-8	Both	51.60
			K-6	Both	89.47
			1-4	Both	95.21
			5-8	Both	56.65
			K-8	Both	52.50
			4YO*4	Both	60.17
			K-5	Both	57.91
			9-12	Both	87.14
			9-12	Both	74.33
			7-12	Both	80.06
			4YO-8	Read	92.71
			6-12	Read	81.23
			7-12	Math	78.69
			K-8	Math	75.35
			K-8	Math	70.92
			K-6	Math	70.28
			4YO-8	Read	70.27
			3-6	Math	69.40
			4YO-5	Math	69.21
			5-8	Read	65.97
			K-6	Math	65.36

LEA Name	School Name	School NCES #	School Type	Gap Area	Index**
			4YO-12	Math	63.94
			K-4	Read	63.47
			4YO-5	Read	63.29
			5-8	Math	62.30
			4YO-3	Math	61.15
			4YO-5	Read	61.12
			K-5	Math	60.72
			7-8	Math	59.62
			K-4	Read	59.60
			5-8	Read	59.48
			4YO-5	Read	59.01
			K-8	Math	57.88
			K-5	Read	57.37
			4YO-5	Read	57.11
			4YO-5	Read	56.27
			4-5	Read	56.25
			K-5	Read	55.65

*4YO: 4 year old students

**For focus schools with qualifying gap in both reading and mathematics, the value of the index is provided for reading.

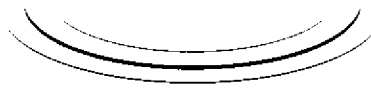
Appendix 1

“Educating Evolving: Maine’s Plan for Putting Learners First” (Maine DOE Strategic Plan)



Education

Maine's Plan for Putting Learners First



Maine Department of Education

January 2012

About the Plan

Almost immediately after he was named Commissioner of Education in March 2011, Stephen Bowen traveled to school districts across Maine and spoke to students, teachers, school administrators and community members about what they saw as the challenges confronting Maine's schools and what role they saw for the Maine Department of Education in confronting those challenges.

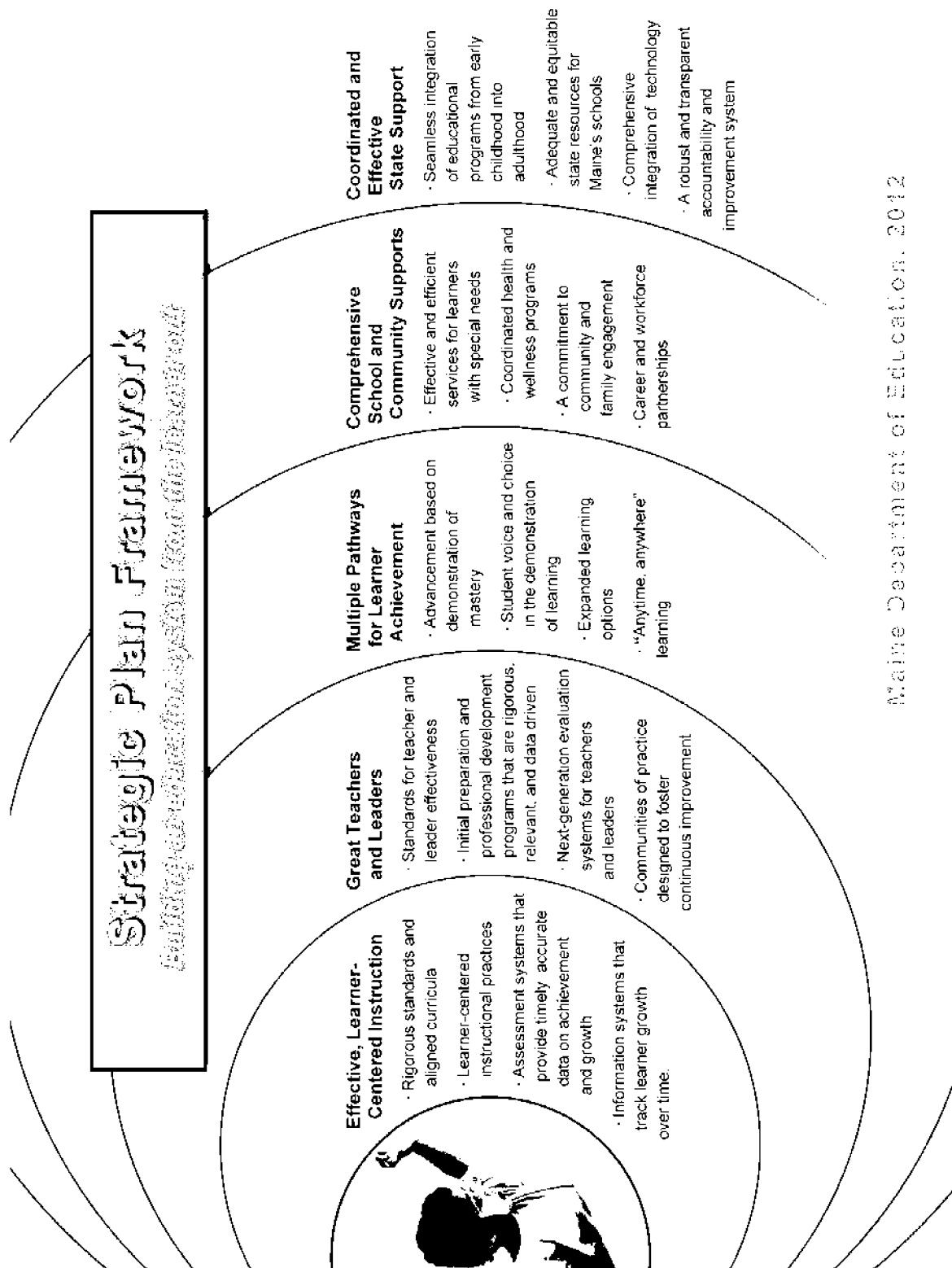
The introductory essay, which begins on page 3, describes Commissioner Bowen's response to what he heard with regard to the direction Maine needs to take in order to realize the vision of its people being among the best educated in the world, and all its students graduating prepared to succeed in college, careers and civic life.

The impetus for the plan itself came in response to the concern, which the Commissioner heard repeatedly as he spoke with educators and policymakers around Maine, that the Department of Education lacked direction. In response, the Commissioner and Department staff reviewed feedback from the tour of Maine schools, and began organizing that feedback into a handful of core priority areas. The five core priority areas that resulted, described more fully in the pages that follow, were then broken down into subcategories, with specific goals, objectives and action steps attached to each.

In response to concerns that resources are lacking at both the state and local levels to implement a comprehensive and far-reaching strategic plan, efforts were made to ensure that the action steps for each goal and objective flowed from a relatively limited set of overarching strategies. The list below briefly describes the basic strategies used throughout the plan. The specific action steps that accompany each goal and objective provide more detail.

Strategy	Description
Planning and Implementation	Working with stakeholders, the Department will create and implement a detailed plan, including timelines, to advance the stated goal.
Regionalization	The Department will work with communities and school districts to support collaboration and help build regional capacities to advance the stated goal.
Best Practices	The Department will develop strategies to research and report on effective educational practices being used in Maine's schools today.
Collaboration and Communication	The Department will work with stakeholders and other partners to advance stated goals, leveraging technology to share information and best practices.
Policy	The Department will pursue statutory or rule changes to advance goals and objectives.
DOE Initiatives	The Department will strategically target staff and other resources to support the stated goal and objective.

As this plan is implemented, Department staff will collaborate with educators in the field to develop a balanced scorecard to track progress on action steps, the achievement of stated objectives and progress on reaching the goals outlined for each subcategory.



Maine Department of Education, 2012

The Case for Change

The Challenges We Face and a Way Forward

For generations, the educators in Maine's public school system have worked tirelessly to meet the educational needs of the students in their care, and their unwavering effort has been evident. Maine's schools routinely score highly in national rankings of educational outcomes and Maine people have a long history of strong support for their local schools.

However, a new age is upon us. Where our schools once needed to prepare young people for work in a predominantly natural resource-based economy of forestry, farming and fishing, they must now prepare students for a global economy in which many of the jobs of Maine's past have become automated or moved offshore. Maine's young people need an entirely new set of skills to succeed in an information-age economy where ideas and innovation move at the speed of light. These new skills are not just related to advances in technology, they are a product of the way society and business work and think: flatter organizations that require more independent thinking and problem-solving; collaboration with people and teams across the aisle and in offices around the globe; and more advanced critical thinking, even in jobs that once were considered manual labor and did not even require a high school degree.

This new age poses a series of challenges that will require us to not simply reform our schools, but to re-imagine them; to build on the successes of the past while creating a model of schooling for this new age.

Challenge 1: Our schools aren't accomplishing what they need to accomplish

The first challenge we confront is that when one measures the success of our schools using the traditional indicators—test scores, graduation rates, and so forth—Maine may well exceed the national averages, but forward progress is slow. Test scores are essentially flat, and graduation rates, while up slightly, are gaining too slowly.

The most recent set of results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, for example, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics at the United States Department of Education, show that the percentage of fourth graders in Maine scoring proficient or better in reading is lower today than it was 20 years ago. Reading proficiency levels for the state's eighth graders have dropped as well. In math, proficiency levels are trending up, but even today, only 45 percent of Maine's fourth graders are proficient or better in math, a rate that drops to just 39 percent by eighth grade.

Maine's high school graduation rate has edged up slightly in recent years, but remains unacceptably low. Too many of Maine's young people fail to complete high school, and too many who do complete high school do not have the knowledge and skills they need to move onto college and careers. The state's higher education institutions report that a shockingly high percentage of incoming students require remedial coursework. The Maine Community College System, for instance, reports that a majority of the students it enrolls right out of high school—51 percent—require some kind of additional academic support. They simply are not prepared to do college-level work.

Employers also express concern that recent high school graduates lack many of the skills the modern workforce requires. Employers interviewed by author Tony Wagner for his book *The Global Achievement Gap* report that students graduating from the nation's high schools struggle with complex and critical thinking, labor to communicate

effectively and work productively in teams, and often lack the capacity to think in the kinds of creative and innovative ways the information-age economy requires.

Our schools, Wagner argues, are not failing. They are simply obsolete: They were built for a bygone era, and the world of the 21st century requires something new.

Challenge 2: Recent efforts to improve schools have come up short

The second challenge facing us is that the steps we have taken to address the problems of our struggling schools have not only failed to make our schools more effective, they have largely made things worse.

In an attempt to turn our schools around, for instance, policymakers instituted high-stakes testing. Today, we grade the effectiveness of schools based on how well students do on standardized tests in two content areas: math and English language arts. We test this year's fourth graders, compare how that group performed relative to last year's fourth graders, then make all sorts of determinations about the effectiveness of schools and teachers based on two sets of scores from two different groups of students in two subject areas.

Our schools have responded to this new reality predictably, and logically, given the expectations: By focusing their efforts on and directing their resources to those academic subjects that are tested, often at the expense of other content areas. During tough financial times especially, schools and districts have freed up resources to invest in tested subjects by cutting programs and course offerings in other areas, such as art and industrial arts, music and foreign languages.

The result is a significant student engagement problem. A 2009 Indiana University study found that 67 percent of students report being bored in school *every day*. When asked why they find school boring, the vast majority of students surveyed—82 percent—report a lack of interest in the material being taught. Nearly half report that they do not see how the material is relevant to them.

These recent accountability efforts have had an adverse effect on educators as well. The nation's teachers feel besieged. The public school structure is demanding something from them that's been asked of no previous generation of educators: They're expected to assure that every student in their care reaches the same high level of academic achievement at the same time, regardless of prior learning or life experiences. Their effectiveness at this daunting task is determined to a large degree by scores on standardized tests.

According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, more than 30 percent of beginning teachers leave the profession within five years, and that rate is climbing. The Commission calculates that this "teacher dropout" crisis costs the nation billions of dollars each year.

In short, recent efforts to improve schools through test-based accountability efforts have largely failed. The intense work undertaken to raise test scores in math and language arts has had little discernable impact on those test scores, and worse still, these efforts are driving educators from the profession and have resulted in a narrowing of school curricula at a time when the job creators of the 21st century are calling for more emphasis on creative and innovative thinking and skills.

Challenge 3: Our traditional school design is standing in the way of success

That standardized testing and the accompanying accountability provisions of laws like the No Child Left Behind Act have failed to transform our schools to any significant degree, despite the best efforts of the educators working in them, suggests that the challenge we face is more fundamental in nature.

It suggests a design problem. The basic architecture of our system of schooling was established, after all, more than a century ago, for an industrial age that has all but vanished.

In fact, one of the most significant developments impacting the design of public schools was the 1892 report of a group known as the Committee of Ten. This high-profile committee of educators, chaired by the president of Harvard University, released a report in that year that outlined the basic design of our public schools today.

The committee suggested that eight years of elementary school be followed by four years of high school. They recommended that in math, arithmetic should be taught from ages 6 to 13, pre-algebra should be addressed at about seventh grade, and algebra should begin at age 14, followed by geometry. The three-year secondary school science curriculum, they suggested, should begin with biology and earth science, move next to chemistry, and then onto physics.

All of this would seem familiar to a student of today.

The committee's report also declared "every subject which is taught at all ...should be taught in the same way and to the same extent to every pupil." It likewise determined that each subject should be granted "equal time allotment" regardless of how much time a student needed to learn it. This was done, the committee wrote, to preserve the "dignity" of each academic subject. For the Committee of Ten, it was the subject matter to which teachers were to pay homage, not the individual learning needs of their students.

After all, this committee was trying to build a system of schools to meet a set of needs that today is outdated. In that era, it was thought that only an "insignificant percentage" of high school graduates would go on to college. As a result, the ideal school system should "be made for those children whose education is not to be pursued beyond the secondary school."

This approach may well have served the nation's interests a century ago, but the global economy of the 21st century, not to mention the well-being of students and future families, requires far more.

The challenge to be confronted, then, is to build a system that prepares every student for some type of post-secondary education and the high-skill careers of today and the future. To do that, we have to address the core design elements of the system we have – the age-based grade levels, the Carnegie units and seat time, the factory-style bell schedules. We have to address the basic architecture of the industrial-era model of schooling built more than a century ago.

Challenge 4: Change must be achieved within existing resources

As if transforming a century-old model of schooling were not challenging enough, it is clear that we must do so without additional financial resources. Whatever work we do to make our schools better must be done by investing the education dollars we have in new ways.

For years, the nation's public schools enjoyed steady and significant increases in funding year after year. Over the

Education Evolving: Maine's Plan for Putting Learners First
Embargoed Copy, January 2012

past 40 years, inflation-adjusted spending on public education nationally has essentially tripled. Ongoing spending increases of this kind, though, are a thing of the past. The \$914 million the state has budgeted for General Purpose Aid to Maine's schools for the 2012-13 school year brings the level of state funding to approximately where it was during the 2006-07 school year. Add to that the loss of various forms of federal funding, and Maine's schools will receive less state and federal funding in 2012-13 than they received in 2011-12.

There is little reason to think that this reality will change anytime soon. The federal government is struggling with massive spending issues, and Maine state government is confronting a shortfall for the current biennial budget that totals more than \$200 million. At the local level, Maine's towns and cities struggle with constant budget pressures as well, and will almost certainly continue for the foreseeable future.

That means waiting for the financial outlook to brighten before taking action is not an option. We – the state Department of Education and Maine's schools and districts – must maximize the use of available resources.

A way forward through a relentless focus on our core priorities

Moving from a century-old model of schooling to a more effective, learner-centered approach will require a steady focus on a handful of core priorities organized around meeting the individual learning needs of all students.

The plan that follows is arranged into five core priority areas that are organized from the learner out, as the accompanying graphic on page 2 illustrates.

- Closest to the learners are the **instructional practices** that take place in the classroom. This core priority area concerns the standards and curricula, classroom practices and instructional techniques, assessment of student learning and the use of data to inform decision-making.
- Effective instructional practices can't be applied without **effective teachers and school leaders**, the second core priority area. Ensuring that every student is surrounded by great educators means focusing on the need to provide top-quality preparation and ongoing support to the state's teachers and leaders.
- Building a system of schooling that meets the needs of all students will require building an educational system with unprecedented flexibility and multiple avenues for student success. Creating **multiple pathways for student achievement** must be a central focus of our efforts.
- For learners to be successful, a **comprehensive network of school and community supports** is critical. We must ensure that learners have access to the services they need to be successful and that families and the broader community outside the school walls are engaged as partners in teaching and learning.
- Every effort must also be made to **carefully align the entire educational system** so that learners can move seamlessly from one educational opportunity to the next. Technology must be integrated seamlessly and system-wide, and we must put a new accountability structure into place.

In the plan that follows, each of these core priority areas is further divided into subcategories, with specific goals, objectives and action steps developed for each. The result is a broad set of specific, measureable steps that will move Maine to a new model of schooling. Such a move won't take place through the imposition of heavy-handed mandates or one-size-fits-all approaches from Augusta, but by building on the innovative work being done in schools across Maine already and by employing strategies to increase collaboration and sharing of best practices.

Indeed, we are fortunate in Maine to have a number of schools and districts that have taken promising steps toward making the five core priority areas central to all that they do. We are beginning to see the profound, positive impact this laser-like focus on core priorities can have on individual students. Students in these early-adopting schools and districts are taking an active role in directing their own education.

Their education is taking place in classrooms intentionally designed to foster student engagement and empowerment. Their learning is facilitated by teachers trained in practices that make expectations transparent. The learning opportunities they are provided meet them where they are and support, encourage, and challenge them.

Making learning experiences like this available to every student in Maine should be our goal. In an era of fiscal challenges, the only way to make that goal a reality is to focus, at both the state and local level, on those core practices that have the greatest impact on student success.

That is the intent of the plan that follows.

The Core Priorities

Using feedback from Maine’s educators, parents, students, policymakers and Department of Education staff, along with current research and a review of promising practices being used in Maine’s schools today, the plan described in the pages that follow has been organized into the following core priority areas and subcategories, with goals, objectives and action steps for each.

Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction

1. Rigorous standards and aligned curricula
2. Learner-centered instructional practices
3. Assessment systems that provide timely, accurate data on achievement and growth
4. Information systems that track learner growth over time

Great Teachers and Leaders

1. Common standards for teacher and leader effectiveness
2. Initial preparation and professional development programs that are rigorous, relevant, and data driven
3. Next-generation evaluation systems for teachers and leaders
4. Communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement

Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement

1. Advancement based on demonstration of mastery
2. Student voice and choice in the demonstration of learning
3. Expanded learning options
4. “Anytime, anywhere” learning

Comprehensive School and Community Supports

1. Effective and efficient services for learners with special needs
2. Coordinated health and wellness programs
3. A commitment to community and family engagement
4. Career and workforce partnerships

Coordinated and Effective State Support

1. Seamless integration of educational programs from early childhood into adulthood
2. Adequate and equitable state resources for Maine’s schools
3. Comprehensive integration of technology
4. A robust and transparent accountability and improvement system

Core Priority Area 1: Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction

The core of the entire educational enterprise is the teaching and learning that happens in classrooms every day. All of the institutional elements that comprise our system of education—the buildings and busses, the administrative structures at the local, state and federal levels, the schools of education—are in place to support what researchers David Tyack and Larry Cuban call the “core” of schooling, those “daily interactions of teachers and students” where learning takes place.

Unfortunately, school reform proposals seldom focus on the specific instructional practices used on a daily basis by teachers in the classroom. In his 2000 white paper *Building a New Structure for School Leadership*, Harvard’s Richard Elmore describes the “sociology” of schools as being one of “loose-coupling.” While “relatively elaborate systems of administrative overhead at the school and district level” are thought necessary for the “adequate supervision” of classroom teachers, Elmore writes, the “technical core” of teaching—“the detailed decisions about what should be taught at any given time, how it should be taught, what students should be expected to learn at any given time, how they should be grouped within classrooms for the purposes of instruction, what they should be required to do to demonstrate their knowledge, and perhaps most importantly, how the learning should be evaluated”—is largely left to individual teachers themselves. In short, while school boards and school administrators manage the larger system, “teachers, working in isolated classrooms, under highly uncertain conditions, manage the technical core” of teaching and learning.

The result, Elmore argues, is that most of the innovation and improvement that does occur in schools tends to take place in “the structures that surround teaching and learning,” rather than directly impacting “the conditions of teaching and learning for actual teachers and students.” As a consequence, “manifestly successful instructional practices that grow out of research or exemplary practice never take root in more than a small proportion of classrooms and schools.”

This perhaps explains why, despite the determined effort of educators across Maine and the nation, the focus in recent years on improving student achievement in the tested subjects has had little discernable effect in terms of improving student outcomes. Meeting the learning needs of all students will require an unprecedented focus on the broad dissemination of those core instructional practices that result in effective teaching and learning.

This focus, in turn, requires a concentration on four elements that are key to effective instruction:

- Rigorous standards and aligned curriculum – *what students are taught*
- Learner-centered instructional practice – *how students are taught*
- Assessment systems that provide timely, accurate data on achievement and growth – *how student learning is measured*
- Information systems that track learner growth over time – *how instructional practices are adjusted based on assessment data*

In the pages that follow, each of these four elements is explored further, with goals, objectives, and action steps outlined for each.

Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction

1. Rigorous standards and aligned curricula

The research is clear that high-performing education systems are built around rigorous standards for both content and performance. Maine's *Learning Results* standards, first adopted in 1997, include content standards in eight areas, framed by an overarching set of Guiding Principles that describe the knowledge and skills believed necessary to prepare every student for college, careers and civic life. With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in 2011, Maine joined 45 other states in embracing internationally benchmarked standards for learning in Math and English Language Arts. Maine is also set to take the lead in the development of next-generation science standards, and continues to participate in national efforts to develop and revise standards in all other content areas.

Rigorous learning standards are meaningless, however, unless they inform instructional practice at the classroom level. As Maine transitions to the Common Core State Standards, it is more important than ever that curricula and materials aligned with the state's learning standards are made available to educators across Maine.

Goal: A variety of instructional materials aligned with the Maine *Learning Results* standards, which include the Common Core State Standards, are readily available to and support the instructional practices of Maine educators.

Objective: Fully implement the Common Core State Standards; provide Maine's educators with access to a resource directory of curricula and resources for every content area and level of achievement aligned with the appropriate set of standards.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Develop a detailed plan for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, which includes targeted training and outreach efforts as well as expanded use of the Maine DOE's website as a resource for standards implementation.	Maine DOE's Common Core implementation team	May 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Establish a state-level, online "Communities of Practice" collaboration platform for developing and vetting standards-aligned curricula and instructional materials, in collaboration with the state's teachers and curriculum coordinators. The venue should allow for the posting and cataloging of standards-aligned curriculum guides, lesson plans, instructional materials and assessment tools.	Maine DOE communications team in cooperation with the state's educators	"Soft" launch by March 1, 2012.
Regionalization	Develop and support regional centers to coordinate implementation of standards and aligned curricula.	Development supported by Maine DOE through the Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012

Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction

2. Learner-centered instructional practices

No matter how well curricula and materials are aligned to learning standards, if instructional practices in the classroom fail to engage learners, those learners will still struggle to achieve. There are educators in classrooms across Maine who are pioneering instructional approaches that make learners active participants in and directors of their own learning. In such settings, learners have a meaningful role in planning learning activities and are allowed to choose the manner by which they demonstrate proficiency. Teachers provide learning opportunities and support the customized needs of each child.

Taking such practices to scale will require a renewed focus on teacher training and support, as well as a significant effort to make materials related to learner-centered instruction available to educators statewide. As Maine already has a cohort of school and district leaders pioneering this work, the Department's role should be to support the ongoing work, and to make the lessons learned by these pioneering schools and districts more widely available.

Goal: Learner-centered instructional strategies are in place in all Maine classrooms.

Objective: Provide state support for existing district-level work in learner-centered instruction, and make materials and resources available to all Maine educators to support the proliferation of learner-centered instructional practices.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
DOE Initiative	Appoint a learner-centered instruction team to continue state support for districts already engaged in the development of learner-centered instructional practices and aid districts new to employing such practices.	Maine DOE's leadership team	Team in place by March 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Develop a state-level "Center for Best Practices," with a focus on learner-centered instruction, to serve as a clearinghouse of materials, support and case studies related to learner-centered instructional practices.	Maine DOE's learner-centered instruction and communications teams	Center launched January 1, 2012
Best Practices	Publish learner-centered materials developed by the Center for Best Practices to the Maine DOE website.	Center for Best Practices, communications team	Website with preliminary Center materials launched by February 15, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Collaborate with Maine teacher preparation programs to expand access to educator training and support related to learner-centered instruction.	Maine DOE learner-centered instruction team, the state's teacher preparation programs	Ongoing

Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction

3. Assessment systems that provide educators with timely, accurate information on learner achievement and growth

Accurately measuring the individual instructional needs of learners requires a thorough analysis of timely assessment data. Today, learners are assessed using a combination of state and local assessment instruments and a mix of teacher-developed classroom assessments. What is required is a set of modern assessment tools to provide teachers and administrators at both the Pre-K and K-12 levels the accurate data needed to make appropriate decisions regarding instructional practice. New assessment tools must assess higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, not simply rote memorization.

Maine is one of the states leading the development of the SMARTER Balanced assessment system, which will ultimately not only replace the state standardized tests in place today, but also provide educators with formative assessment tools designed to inform instructional practice throughout the school year. Implementation of the SMARTER Balanced assessment system, as well as assessment systems for those subject areas not included in SMARTER Balanced, will require a significant statewide training and support effort.

Additionally, expanding access to high-quality, teacher-developed assessment tools could be greatly enhanced by the development of a statewide resource directory of such assessment tools, organized and indexed to the *Learning Results* and Common Core, and accompanied by associated lesson plans and learning materials.

Goal: All of Maine educators have access to modern, 21st-century assessment systems and use assessment information to inform instruction.

Objective: Successfully transition to the SMARTER Balanced assessment system, and develop a state-level resource directory of teacher-developed assessment instruments aligned with the state's *Learning Results*, which include the Common Core State Standards.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Develop a comprehensive plan for the statewide implementation of the SMARTER Balanced assessment system.	Maine DOE assessment team, in collaboration with educators and stakeholders	Implementation plan due September 1, 2012
Communication and Collaboration	Use online Communities of Practice to support the development of a resource directory of teacher-developed assessment tools, including rubrics and examples of student work, organized and aligned with the state's academic standards.	Maine DOE learner-centered instruction and communications teams, in cooperation with state's educators	Assessment practice group in place by July 1, 2012
Regionalization	Create regional teacher development centers to coordinate regional training and support in the use of the SMARTER Balanced assessment instruments.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012

Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction

4. Information systems that track learner growth over time

Students are assessed repeatedly throughout their academic careers, yet tracking student growth over time is complicated by the lack of a single data system into which assessment data from various state and district sources can be entered. Maine is in the process, however, of developing a Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), which will be able to track individual student achievement over time, from Pre-K to higher education and the workforce. This will provide educators with invaluable data on student growth, and allow policymakers to measure the effectiveness of the various educational initiatives and programs a learner encounters throughout his or her educational career.

Once the system is in place, a significant effort must be made to ensure that teachers and school leaders know how to make the best use of the data the system provides. Efforts to train educators are already underway and must be expanded as the full deployment of the system draws nearer and more focus is placed on the use of data to inform instructional practices.

Ongoing support for this data system, which was developed with one-time federal grants, must be secured. The state should immediately begin work on a sustainability plan that identifies the ongoing costs to maintain and update the SLDS and makes recommendations for funding and support.

Goal: Maine’s educators have ready access to helpful data and regularly use it to tailor instruction and improve student outcomes.

Objective: Complete the deployment of the State Longitudinal Data System, expand data system training opportunities for educators statewide, and develop a sustainability plan for the system moving forward.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Develop a comprehensive SLDS implementation plan, which outlines the full deployment of the system and related training and support initiatives.	Maine DOE’s SLDS development and communications teams, stakeholders	Plan due July 1, 2012
Regionalization	Develop and provide support for regional centers to coordinate implementation of SLDS training initiatives, with a specific focus on the use of SLDS and other data to inform instructional practices.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012
Planning and Implementation	Develop SLDS sustainability plan that calculates ongoing system costs, identifies potential sources for funding and support.	SLDS development team	Plan due September 1, 2012

Core Priority Area 2: Great Teachers and Leaders

Systemic changes to standards, curricula, instructional practices and assessment will achieve little if efforts are not made to ensure that every learner has access to highly effective teachers and school leaders.

Research from around the globe makes clear that educator effectiveness has a profound effect on achievement. Indeed, the findings suggest that no other school-based factor is more important to learner outcomes than the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. In a recent report, the Washington-based Center for American Progress found that “effective teachers are critical to raising achievement and closing longstanding gaps among student subgroups. Indeed, the research on this point has become absolutely clear: Students who have three or four strong teachers in a row will soar academically, regardless of their racial or economic background, while those who have a sequence of weak teachers will fall further and further behind.” The impact of effective school leaders is just as profound.

As a consequence of these findings, teacher and leader effectiveness have become a central focus of federal education policy in recent years. At the center of the Obama administration’s Race to the Top initiative was a significant emphasis on policy related to teacher and leader effectiveness. States wishing to take advantage of the flexibility the administration is now offering around some key aspects of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act will be required to develop detailed guidelines related to teacher and leader evaluation and require that local districts adopt evaluation systems consistent with state guidelines.

Improving teacher and leader effectiveness will require the development of a comprehensive system of training and support that begins with rigorous preparation programs and follows teachers and leaders throughout their careers.

Within this core priority area are four subcategories related to different aspects of teacher and leader effectiveness:

- Common standards for teacher and leader effectiveness
- Initial preparation and professional development programs that are rigorous, relevant, and data driven
- Next generation evaluation systems for teachers and leaders
- Communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement

Great Teachers and Leaders

1. Common standards for teacher and leader effectiveness

Advancing the cause of teacher and leader effectiveness means first defining what effective teaching and school leadership looks like. Through our *Learning Results*, Maine set standards for what its students should know and be able to do. It has not, however, established in law what its teachers and school leaders should know and be able to do.

Fortunately, educators across the nation have done a significant amount of work in this area, and several Maine school districts are piloting efforts to define performance expectations for their educators. In 2011, the Council of Chief State School Officers released an updated version of the core teaching standards adopted by the Interstate

Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). This effort comes on the heels of the release, in 2008, of an updated version of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards for school leaders (ISLLC). Other national organizations, such as the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have developed and released standards of their own.

Maine should take advantage of these efforts and join the community of states that have adopted clear standards for teacher and school leader effectiveness. Next, efforts should be undertaken to use these standards as the basis for aligning the state's policies regarding approval of teacher preparation programs, teacher and leader certification and recertification, the employment of educational personnel and their evaluation, mentoring, and ongoing professional development. This work should be done in close collaboration with stakeholder groups, especially those representing teachers and school leaders.

Goal: Educator preparation, training and evaluation are informed by a common understanding of effective teaching and leadership.

Objective: Adopt state standards for teacher and leader effectiveness and align state statute and rules accordingly.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Develop state standards for teacher and leader effectiveness for adoption by the Maine Legislature.	Maine DOE, in collaboration with stakeholders	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Policy	Establish plan to update related rule chapters in order to ensure that effectiveness standards are fully implemented in rule and policy. Goal to have all rules and policy updated within five years.	Maine DOE, State Board of Education, stakeholders	Implementation plan due September 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Develop plan to publicize effectiveness standards; feature examples of effective teaching and school leadership in online Communities of Practice.	Maine DOE communications team to develop publicity plan	Plan due September 1, 2012

Great Teachers and Leaders

2. Initial preparation and ongoing professional development programs that are rigorous, relevant, and data-driven

Today, the availability and effectiveness of both initial preparation and professional development programs for teachers and leaders vary dramatically. The goal should be to have high-quality initial preparation programs that are research-driven and classroom-based, as well as ongoing professional development opportunities for in-service educators that are rigorous, relevant, and directed, as nearly as possible, by real-time data on the needs of both learners and educators. Training opportunities should take place, as often as is practical, in the schools where educators do their work. Effective preparation and ongoing training for Maine's early childhood educators are especially critical needs.

Providing leadership training and development has been a challenge as well. While preparation programs for school leaders tend to focus on administration and management, a more pressing need in an era of real change is training

and support related to leadership in executing transformations. Moving from a century-old model of schooling to a proficiency-based, learner-centered model of education will require fundamental change, and such change will require training in change leadership.

Making high-quality training and support for teachers and leaders more readily available will almost certainly require building some regional capacity to deliver it. The state should pursue the creation of regional teacher development centers as a means of maximizing training and professional development resources, while still connecting such opportunities to the specific instructional needs of local teachers and school leaders.

Goal: Maine educators are consistently supported through high-quality training and professional development.

Objective: Expand access to high-quality initial and ongoing training and professional development for teachers and school leaders, with a specific emphasis on transformation leadership and on effectively and efficiently meeting the training and support needs of all educators.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Amend the Chapter 114 rules governing state approval of teacher preparation programs, with the goal of improving the rigor and relevance of such programs.	Chapter 114 stakeholder group, Maine DOE, State Board of Education	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Regionalization	Develop and provide support for regional teacher development centers to coordinate and conduct regional professional development opportunities for teachers and school leaders.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012
DOE Initiative	Develop an annual state-level “leadership academy” for school and district leaders, with a specific focus on change leadership.	Maine DOE, in collaboration with stakeholders, business leaders	Initial leadership academy to take place summer, 2012

Great Teachers and Leaders

3. Next-generation evaluation systems for teachers and leaders

In its landmark 2009 study of educator evaluation systems, *The Widget Effect*, The New Teacher Project concluded that current educator evaluation systems “fail to differentiate performance among teachers,” with the result that “a teacher’s effectiveness—the most important factor for schools in improving student achievement—is not measured, recorded, or used to inform decision-making in any meaningful way.” The same could be said for the evaluation of school and district leaders.

Effective teaching and school leadership require meaningful evaluation of teachers and school leaders. This in turn requires high-quality evaluation systems, administered by trained evaluators, that are fair and that provide clear and constructive feedback, which is then used to improve professional practice. Consistent with the principles outlined in

the U.S. Department of Education’s ESEA waiver framework, the State should adopt a common set of standards that informs the development, at the district level, of teacher and leader evaluation systems.

The state should also work with districts to develop regional teacher development centers that not only support the training of the evaluators themselves, but make use of evaluation data to design and implement targeted professional development.

Goal: Highly effective educator evaluation systems are in place in every Maine school district.

Objective: Adopt statewide guidelines for locally developed teacher and leader evaluation systems, and support the development of a network of trained evaluators based in regional teacher development centers.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Adopt statewide standards for teacher and leader evaluation systems, consistent with ESEA flexibility guidance from USDOE.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Collaboration and Communication	Develop teacher and principal evaluation models consistent with adopted state standards and post to Maine DOE website.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	Evaluation models posted to web by July 1, 2012
Regionalization	Develop and provide support for regional teacher development centers to coordinate and conduct training of teacher and leader evaluators, and to design and implement training and professional development activities.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012

Great Teachers and Leaders

4. Communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement

As Harvard’s Tony Wagner argues in his book *The Global Achievement Gap*, teaching has been and continues to be a largely solitary practice providing few opportunities for collaboration and sharing of best practices. With the advent of the Internet, the sharing of new ideas and new approaches to teaching can be far more readily facilitated. Instructional materials, research on best practices, and even videos of effective instructional methods can be shared instantly across the state and around the world. Today, though, no single statewide library of such materials exists. At the same time, large volumes of materials are available, but the absence of “curation,” context and discussion make it extremely challenging to professionals seeking the right resource.

The Department is already at work developing an online “Communities of Practice” collaboration platform that will allow the state’s educators to post instructional resources of various kinds, indexed to the state’s *Learning Results*, and available anytime, day or night. The online collaboration platform will allow visitors to browse the work of various practice groups, participate in conversations about the materials and educational practice challenges, and join practice groups where they can more actively participate in ongoing development of education solutions. The

platform could facilitate the development of a resource directory of best practices and become home to a collection of webinars and videos on effective instructional practices, while also connecting educators to like sites and resources centers in other states and around the globe. While in development at the moment, an early version of the site should be developed and deployed soon. Growing the platform to allow an unlimited number of self-formed and managed practice groups is the goal of this effort.

Additionally, the state should pursue development of “lab schools” that can be centers both for research on best practices and for the sharing of effective instructional practices with visiting educators.

Goal: Maine’s educators participate easily and often in statewide sharing of instructional best practices and professional development opportunities.

Objective: Develop a state-level, online resource center devoted to the sharing of effective educational practices and professional development resources. Form a network of regional lab schools that develop, implement and promote effective practices.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Collaboration and Communication	Use the online Communities of Practice to facilitate the development of a resource directory for instructional resources and professional development materials.	Maine DOE communications team, in cooperation with the state’s educators	Initial launch of resource directory by April 1, 2012
Best Practices	Develop a “Lab School” designation for schools undertaking research and development on effective instructional practices.	Maine DOE, in collaboration with stakeholders	Implementation plan to be developed by September, 2012

Core Priority Area 3: Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement

For generations, the adults in our schools have decided what students learn; when, where, and how they learn it; and in what ways they demonstrate what they have learned. It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that this approach—in which the learner is obligated to adapt to the educational institution instead of the other way around—simply does not work for many kids. For too long, such a model has prevented too many students from finding success in the school environment.

The system of schools we have today is one in which time is the constant and learning is the variable. Teachers and students are given a fixed period of time in which to cover a fixed curriculum. The result is a model that falls short of meeting the needs of all students. Some students disengage because the pace of the class does not challenge them, while others fail to achieve learning goals because the pace is too fast. As Nicholas Colangelo, Susan Assouline and Miraca Gross write in their 2004 report, *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students*, our system of education keeps the most advanced students from reaching their full potential “by forcing them to learn in a lock-step manner with their classmates.” “The evidence,” the authors write, “indicates that when children’s academic and social needs are not met, the result is boredom and disengagement from school.”

Along with being grouped with students of the same age, students are expected to learn in the same physical setting as all other students in their community: in a brick and mortar elementary school, middle school, and high school within defined geographical boundaries. Within the physical structure, learning in one content area is often completely separate from learning in another: Math is learned in math class and civics in civics class. Credit is earned by sitting in certain classes for certain periods of time.

In a learner-centered, proficiency-based system, students advance upon demonstration of mastery, rather than remain locked in an age-based cohort that progresses through a fixed curriculum at a fixed pace, regardless of learning achievement.

The good news is that schools and districts across Maine and the nation are already implementing a learner-centered instructional approach, one that provides learners with more say in their education, more choices about how, where and when they learn, and more opportunities for them to demonstrate success anytime, anywhere. The work of these educational pioneers, who are providing customized experiences for each student, should be studied. Best practices in learner-centered, proficiency-based instruction should be developed, shared, discussed, and constantly improved.

Additional steps must be taken to provide learners with every opportunity to succeed. Learners must be partners in and directors of their own learning. They must help to design learning activities and have some say in how that learning will be evaluated. For example, schools across Maine already make use of “capstone projects”—interdisciplinary, theme-based assessment instruments designed, at least in part, by the students themselves.

As we move away from the factory-era, assembly line model of schooling, we must also begin moving away from the practice of having the student’s street address serve as the primary determinant of the school that student attends. Expanding school choice options, such as charter schools, meets this goal. Moreover, we need to move away from a model where the only place that learning is recognized as having happened is in school. More than any previous generation, this generation of young people will be one of lifelong learners, acquiring new skills and processing new information as a routine part of life. The technological age in which we now live will provide this generation of

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learners with access to a variety of learning options and opportunities that is without precedent in human history. Already, through the Internet, students have access to an enormous variety of learning options, including online courses delivered at little or no cost from all over the world. The idea that the learning that takes place outside the walls of the school somehow doesn't "count" is yet another idea whose time has come and gone.

Truly embracing a "learning without barriers" model will mean more flexibility within the walls of the school and more opportunities for learning outside the walls. It will require a new architecture for learning, one that involves new ways of organizing students for instruction, new ways to assess student learning, and new learning opportunities both within the existing structure of schools and beyond it.

A system that fully recognizes multiple pathways for a student to achieve will embrace the following four tenets:

- Advancement based on demonstration of mastery
- Student voice and choice in the demonstration of learning
- Expanded learning options
- "Anytime, anywhere" learning

Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement

1. Advancement based on demonstration of mastery

For as long as anyone can remember, learners have been organized into groups by age. They move through school in age-based cohorts in lockstep, whether they fully understand what is taught or not. As a consequence, students who have already mastered certain content must wait for the others to catch up, while those who have yet to fully understand a certain concept are pushed to move on anyway. What is needed is a move to a learner-centered, proficiency-based system in which learners advance only when they have demonstrated mastery of defined learning outcomes.

Transitioning from the age-based grade level model, which has been in place for more than a century, to something new will take a sustained effort over a number of years. Luckily, there are already schools and school districts here in Maine moving forward with proficiency-based systems. The state should take an active role in supporting these efforts, undertaking research on this new approach and reporting outcomes. The Department's new Center for Best Practices, supported by grant funds, should study and report on the work of Maine districts implementing a proficiency-based model. Through the online Communities of Practice collaboration platform, to be developed by the Department in 2012, materials and resources related to proficiency-based models can be shared. The platform can also provide a platform for professional discussion and development connected to those materials.

Since the adoption of the Maine *Learning Results* standards back in 1997, the Maine Legislature has envisioned a true, proficiency-based system, including a standards-based high school diploma. If Maine is serious about moving in this direction, legislation will need to be adopted that moves the state away from age-based grade levels and Carnegie units as a measure of academic progress at the high school level. Statutory language should be adopted embracing a true standards-based high school diploma.

Goal: All Maine students learn in a proficiency-based model that allows them to move at their own pace and advance when they have mastered learning outcomes.

Objective: Develop and implement a comprehensive set of state policies and supports to aid schools and school districts as they move from an age-based model to a proficiency-based model of schooling.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Best Practices	Establish a Center for Best Practices at the Maine DOE to focus on research and reporting related to proficiency-based systems here in Maine.	Maine DOE	Center launched January 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Use the online Communities of Practice to share resources and best practices related to proficiency-based learning.	Maine DOE, districts piloting proficiency-based learning	Online practice group on proficiency-based learning in place by May 1, 2012
Planning and Implementation	Establish a learner-centered instruction team at the Maine DOE, tasked with coordinating support for proficiency-based districts and establishing a communications strategy related to proficiency-based systems.	Maine DOE	Team in place by March 1, 2012, communications plan adopted by June 1, 2012
Policy	Adopt statutory language requiring proficiency-based high school diplomas by a date certain.	Maine DOE, Maine Legislature	By completion of 2012 legislative session

Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement

2. Student voice and choice in the demonstration of learning

A truly learner-centered model of schooling allows for advancement based on demonstration of mastery. It also makes the learner a partner in determining not just the learning activities to be undertaken but the means by which that learning is to be demonstrated.

In schools across Maine and the nation, some variation of this model already exists. In high schools, especially, students are often asked to design culminating experiences such as senior theses or capstone projects. Such projects are generally conducted in collaboration with faculty advisers, are often interdisciplinary in nature, and are typically shared or presented in a public forum. The intent of such projects is not only to demonstrate the application of student learning, but to mirror the kind of work typically found in the world beyond high school, where one applies skills and knowledge from a variety of content areas to create a new product or new meaning.

To ensure that assessments of student learning are valid and reliable, efforts must be made to develop standards for learner-designed, performance-based assessments, and to provide both teachers and students with exemplars of such assessments, including examples of student work.

The state can play a role here, using the online Communities of Practice to develop a clearinghouse of such assessment tools. The ability to upload video clips and other materials to the platform will allow for the posting of exemplars of student work. The potential also exists for professional development opportunities to be made

available that allow teachers to score student-developed projects online, using a common rubric, and compare the score they give to the scores of others.

In pursuing this work, policymakers need to take care to avoid the mistakes of the “local assessment systems” initiative of the early 2000s, which, in an attempt to provide local control over student assessment, created an extraordinary amount of work for teachers and school leaders. Efforts should be made to take full advantage of modern technology to make available to educators a wide variety of learner-centered assessment approaches.

Goal: Learner-designed assessments are used in schools across Maine, making students active participants in setting and meeting expectations.

Objective: Provide Maine’s educators with access to exemplars of valid, student-developed assessment tools and expand professional development opportunities related to the implementation of such assessment systems.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Collaboration and Communication	Use Online Communities of Practice to share resources and best practices.	Maine DOE, districts piloting proficiency-based learning	Creation of relevant practice group by May 1, 2012

Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement

3. Expanded learning options

Today, all public schools are required to provide students the opportunity to attend Career and Technical Education (CTE) and access its rigorous career preparation programming. Adult Education programming and the post-secondary options it offers are also prevalent throughout the state. School systems create additional educational options as well, in the form of alternative schools. In addition, thousands of Maine students can choose the schools they attend, and with the passage of recent legislation, Maine will soon allow the development of public charter schools, creating yet another educational option for learners.

While learning opportunities such as these may provide many students with a more appropriate educational setting, access is often limited. Every effort must be made to ensure that students can access a wide array of rigorous, proficiency-based educational programming, both within the resident school unit and outside of it.

And while schools today typically “count” only the learning that happens within school walls during the school day, a learner-centered educational system recognizes that learning takes place in many settings at all times of the day. More than any generation before it, this generation of young people will have access to countless learning opportunities, presented in a variety of settings. Schools are only beginning to move in this direction. They must work collaboratively with families, businesses, community organizations and others to accelerate this evolution and provide all students with rigorous, real-world learning opportunities.

Goal: A wide variety of learning opportunities and settings give all students access to educational options that work for them.

Objective: Establish in statute “multiple pathways” for student achievement that minimize barriers to available education options and ensure access to a broad array of learning options.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Adopt statutory language to expand student access to CTE and allow students to use Adult Education classes as a path to high school completion.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Policy	Adopt statutory language expanding school choice options for all Maine students.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Policy	Fully implement the state’s charter school law, including establishment of State Charter School Commission (SCSC), enactment of Maine DOE bill updating statutory language, final adoption of rules governing charter school development.	Maine DOE, State Charter School Commission, stakeholders	SCSC in place by January 1, 2012, updated statute and rules in place by completion of 2012 session

Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement

4. “Anytime, anywhere” learning

While schools once had a near monopoly with regard to the provision of educational programs and services, technological advances provide students today with a far wider array of educational options.

Online and digital learning, for example, which allows students to learn at the time, place and pace most effective for them, is growing dramatically. The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) reports that “in 2010, over 4 million K-12 students participated in a formal online learning program,” and that “online learning enrollments are growing by 46% a year.” That growth rate, reports iNACOL, “is accelerating.”

While Maine led the way a decade ago with a learning technology initiative that put laptop computers into the hands of tens of thousands of students, the state is falling behind when it comes to digital learning. States across the nation have launched online or virtual schools of one kind or another, and some have even mandated that students take at least one digital course as a condition of graduation. Maine needs a comprehensive digital learning strategy that ensures its students are prepared for the digital age in which they live.

Teachers and school leaders will also need additional knowledge and skills as digital learning becomes more popular and widespread. Efforts should be undertaken to ensure that teacher and leader preparation programs include training in digital learning, and the state’s learning technology team should continue its work to provide ongoing professional development opportunities related to digital learning.

As for Maine’s schools, if they are to remain relevant in this changing world, they must adopt an approach that recognizes digital learning options and must begin tailoring their own educational programming to allow for

“anytime, anywhere” learning. The state can assist in this effort by providing a clearinghouse of digital learning resources and by establishing and reporting on digital learning best practices.

Goal: All Maine learners actively participate in digital learning opportunities that engage them and allow self-directed, self-paced learning.

Objective: As part of a comprehensive digital learning strategy, develop approaches to assist districts in adopting policies and practices that support “anytime, anywhere” learning, including expanded access to digital learning and other educational options outside the classroom.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	In collaboration with stakeholders, adopt a comprehensive, multi-year digital learning strategic plan designed to expand access to digital learning opportunities for all Maine students.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	Complete plan summer of 2012, with recommendations reported to the 126 th Maine legislature
Collaboration and Communication	Develop and post to Maine DOE website materials and resources related to digital learning best practices.	Maine DOE MLTI team	Ongoing

Core Priority Area 4: Comprehensive School and Community Supports

Surrounding the teaching and learning that take place in classrooms and other educational settings is an extensive network of school and community supports that are critical for learner achievement. In even the most effective teaching and learning environments, learners will still struggle if they lack appropriate support for special learning needs, confront health and wellness issues, have limited access to learning opportunities beyond the school walls, or struggle to see how the work they do in school prepares them for college, careers and civic life. Highly effective school systems integrate these systems of support and interaction in order to ensure that effective teaching and learning can take place.

In many European nations, for instance, not only are health and other services for students more readily available, but fewer barriers exist between schools and the communities they serve. In many such systems, students complete learning outcomes while working in apprenticeships and internships with employers.

Within this core priority area are four subcategories related to providing needed services and supports to students:

- Effective and efficient services for learners with special needs
- Coordinated health and wellness programs
- A commitment to community and family engagement
- Career and workforce partnerships

Comprehensive School and Community Supports

1. Effective and efficient services for learners with special needs

Students with special learning needs require adequate support in order to succeed. But school districts face a daunting challenge in providing those required services: They are under constant pressure to contain rising costs for special education at a time when the number of students with multiple and severe learning and behavioral issues is on the rise.

According to the Fordham Institute, Maine has one of the highest rates of special education identification in the country. At 17.25 percent, Maine's rate well exceeds the national average of 13.14 percent. In fact, only three other states—Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New York—identify a higher percentage of their students as in need of special education services. A sensible first step toward finding efficiencies might be to undertake a detailed study to examine Maine's high rate of special education identification.

Maine also seems to go about providing services to special education students in a very labor-intensive way. The Fordham Institute's report identifies Maine as having one of the nation's highest special education staff-to-student ratios. At 210 staff members for every 1,000 special education students, Maine has the sixth highest ratio in the country, well above the national average of 128 to 1,000. Some of that high staff ratio is almost certainly due to Maine's rural nature, but Fordham does report that there are much larger rural states with much lower personnel ratios. Additional study should be undertaken to determine the extent to which Maine is using cost-effective best practices in the provision of special education services.

Addressing the challenge of providing cost-effective special education services will almost certainly require building more regional capacities around special education administration and service provision. Much the same could be said of services for students with limited English proficiency.

Goal: All students with special learning needs have access to efficient, effective and appropriate services that help them succeed.

Objective: Review current practices with regard to the provision of services to students with special learning needs, and develop regional approaches to the delivery of special educational services, including the development of regional support centers for learners with special educational needs, their parents and families, and the educators who serve them.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Review current special education policy and practices; recommend changes for the next legislative session. Review to include analysis of data regarding special education eligibility, placements, and staffing ratios to determine factors that influence determinations of eligibility and higher-than-average staffing.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	Report due January 1, 2013
Best Practices	Publish a page on Maine DOE website to share evidence-based best practices with regard to special education services.	Maine DOE	September 1, 2012
Regionalization	Use the Fund for Efficient Delivery of Educational Services to pilot models of regional special education administration and services delivery.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012

Comprehensive School and Community Supports

2. Coordinated health and wellness programs

The health and wellness of all members of the school community have always been important factors influencing learner achievement and growth. Today, young learners often come to school with myriad physical, developmental, behavioral and emotional health issues. School personnel also are challenged with physical, personal and emotional issues of their own. Schools need to respond by working to coordinate access to a seamless array of health and wellness services for children, families and staff, developed in cooperation with health, counseling, wellness and nutrition resources outside the school walls.

Additionally, every effort must be made to ensure that schools and school districts have access to the latest information and resources on best practices in delivering health and wellness services.

In recent years, policy changes at the state level with regard to Maine's Medicaid program, MaineCare, have had an enormous impact on the capacity that schools have to provide needed health services. Still, today Maine's school districts and the wider health care community remain uncertain about current MaineCare policies and procedures. The state Department of Education and Department of Health and Human Services must partner in new ways to ensure that health care providers have access to clear policies and procedures around the use of MaineCare funding.

Goal: Coordinated health and wellness programs contribute to a healthy school environment that helps learners make the most out of school.

Objective: Further coordinate, at the state, regional and local levels, school programming in health, wellness, counseling and nutrition. Continue the ongoing collaboration with the state Department of Health and Human Services to ensure access to needed health services.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
DOE Initiative	Review Maine DOE's health and wellness programs. Potentially develop a coordinated student health and wellness office or team at the Maine DOE.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	Plan due July 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Support the ongoing work of Maine DHHS to create a detailed manual on MaineCare and other health and wellness-related policy and programs.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with DHHS, stakeholders	Manual due September 1, 2012
Best Practices	Publish a page on Maine DOE website dedicated to sharing evidence-based best practices with regard to health and wellness services.	Maine DOE	September 1, 2012

Comprehensive School and Community Supports

3. A commitment to community and family engagement

The involvement of families and the wider community in a child's education has always been critical to student success. According to the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University, repeated studies have found that "through high school, family involvement contributed to positive results for students, including higher achievement, better attendance, more course credits earned, more responsible preparation for class, and other indicators of success in school." Research also suggests that community partnerships, in the form of service learning opportunities, for instance, also have an impact on student outcomes.

Partnerships with the world beyond the school walls are especially important in a learner-centered system of education. Learners will take part in home- and community-based learning opportunities, including online and distance learning, and will be asked to demonstrate mastery of standards through community-centered capstone projects. In order to support the principle of student-centered, anytime, anywhere learning, schools will need to interact with and engage families and communities as never before.

The Department can play a role in advancing engagement efforts by sharing models of effective family and community partnerships. As the Department redesigns its website, for instance, it could create a clearinghouse for best practices in family and community outreach.

The state has an additional resource in the form of the Maine Commission for Community Service, which coordinates various volunteerism and community service programs across Maine. While the Commission is currently housed at the State Planning Office, the administration has put forward a proposal to move it into the Department of Education. Such a move could potentially mean an expansion of the state's capacities to support school and community partnerships.

Goal: Schools and districts are engaged in unprecedented partnerships with families and the broader community as a way to expand learning opportunities for students.

Objective: Expand the state’s capacity to support family and community partnerships at the school and district level.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Collaboration and Communication	Publish a page on Maine DOE website dedicated to providing models of family and community partnerships established in schools across Maine and the nation.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	September 1, 2012
Planning and Implementation	Develop a plan, in cooperation with the Maine Commission for Community Service, to more fully implement school and community partnerships.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with the MCCS	By completion of 2012 legislative session

Comprehensive School and Community Supports

4. Career and workforce partnerships

Even in this time of high unemployment, employers report that they struggle to find employees with the knowledge and skills the modern workplace requires. The era of the No Child Left Behind Act, with its emphasis on tested academic subjects, has led to a narrowing of school curricula, which has often led to a decline in course offerings in the industrial arts and other fields oriented toward career preparation. Many employers report being interested in hosting school visits or providing students with workplace internships, but find that schools show little interest or have little capacity to take advantage of such opportunities.

Building the workforce of Maine’s future will require an unprecedented partnership between employers and educational systems at all levels. Learners should have broad access to opportunities for workforce and career exploration, and educational programs at all levels should work to ensure that their students develop college- and career-ready skills. Opportunities for students to intern with employers should be expanded and flexible schedules should be created to allow students to apprentice with employers part-time while completing their studies. Efforts should be made to align curricula and coursework at all educational levels in order to create clear college and career pathways for students.

A good first step in this work would be for the Maine DOE to survey school districts, Career and Technical Education centers and adult education programs to determine current practices with regard to career and workforce partnerships. The results of the survey could then be used to develop strategies to expand such opportunities. Efforts should also be undertaken to review state law in order to identify potential barriers to expanding educational opportunities in Maine’s workplaces.

Goal: Students commonly access internships, apprenticeships and other opportunities to learn in workplace settings, apply academic lessons and explore potential career fields.

Objective: Develop a set of strategies for the expansion of career and workforce partnerships, based on feedback from school districts and the employer community.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
DOE Initiative	Survey Maine's school districts to identify current practices with regard to business and workforce partnerships.	Maine DOE	End of 2011-12 school year
Planning and Implementation	Use survey results, along with feedback from stakeholders, to develop strategies for expanding access to partnership opportunities.	Maine DOE, working with stakeholders	Strategies developed by September 2012
Policy	Undertake a review of state law and policy in order to identify barriers to career and workplace educational opportunities.	Maine DOE	By 2013 legislative session

Core Priority Area 5: Coordinated and Effective State Support

Far from the classrooms where learning occurs are state-level structures and systems that, while largely unknown to learners, are critical to helping them prepare for college, careers and civic life. Whether they know it or not, learners rely on coherent and consistent structures and policies at the state level that are critical to a high-functioning, learner-centered system of education.

The educational journey that learners take is made far easier when the education systems that serve them work collaboratively to align programs and practices, making the move from one educational setting to another as seamless as possible.

Maine's public higher education institutions, for example, are taking steps to better align with each other and with the state's high schools and Career and Technical Education centers. At the other end of the educational pipeline, Maine's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant proposal, while ultimately unsuccessful in winning a grant award, established a new cooperative relationship between the state Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services, that will better integrate services for preschoolers. At the high school level, a number of Maine communities are exploring ways to bring higher education facilities to high school campuses so students can easily take advantage of advanced academic opportunities. Work is also underway at the state level to identify funding sources, policies and structures that can allow more of Maine's high school students to participate in post-secondary courses while still in high school.

It is schools and school districts that do the hard work of instructing, assessing and providing for the well-being of students; hiring effective educators, evaluating their performance and allowing them to continue their professional growth; and engaging families and the broader community in service of learning. But for them to do their important work, schools and districts need adequate and effective support from the state.

Most of that support comes in the form of state funding for schools. By approving a 2004 ballot referendum requiring a 55 percent state share of the cost of public education, Maine voters affirmed their support for a significant level of state funding for schools. Unfortunately, Maine has never reached the goal of a 55 percent state share, and the way the state's money is distributed to Maine's schools is a source of constant debate.

An effective state education agency is also important to supporting Maine's public education system. The state Department of Education has a number of regulatory duties it is required to perform under law, but it also must serve to guide and support the work of Maine's educators and school leaders.

One area where the state can play a critical role is in the coordinated integration of technology. A learner-centered educational system requires effective data systems that track learner achievement over time and across multiple educational settings. Unfortunately, local school districts have been frustrated by technology issues at the state level that have stood in the way of compatibility between local and state student information systems and streamlined submission of required data to the state. Efforts must be undertaken to address the data needs of the state's schools and school districts and to work with them to address additional data and technology needs.

Lastly, Maine's public schools need a state accountability structure focused on ensuring and accurately tracking the growth and achievement of each learner. The state recently began that work as part of crafting an application to the U.S. Department of Education for flexibility in implementing the accountability provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The work began with a public survey and three public forums in December 2011 focused on school improvement and accountability. The 1,500 survey responses and other feedback demonstrated a high level of interest in a fair and constructive accountability system that judges student achievement and school performance on multiple measures, rather than on the basis of a single standardized test. The Maine Department of Education has committed to the long-term work of engaging stakeholders in designing an accountability and improvement system that meets those needs.

This core priority area is divided into the following four sub-categories that each details a specific state structure or policy upon which the state's learners and public schools depend:

- Seamless integration of educational programs from early childhood into adulthood
- Adequate and equitable state resources for Maine's schools
- Comprehensive integration of technology
- A robust and transparent accountability and improvement system

Coordinated and Effective State Support

1. Seamless integration of educational programs from early childhood into adulthood

For a learner-centered educational system to function, all the elements of that system must be carefully aligned to allow learners to move at their own pace and have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Too frequently, however, the various pieces of the educational system are disconnected from one another. Early childhood programs are disconnected from the elementary school programs they feed into. A middle school may embrace a learner-centered model, but the high school its students are to attend does not. Barriers are sometimes erected that prevent students from having access to Career and Technical Education programs, or that complicate the transition from high school to post-secondary educational opportunities.

Every effort must be made, from the highest levels, to ensure that educational programs are fully aligned and that they all embrace a model of schooling that puts the needs of the learner first.

Some of this important work is already underway. Recent meetings between the Maine DOE and the state's institutions of public higher education have resulted in an agreement to establish a collaborative working group to focus exclusively on post-secondary transition issues. This past summer, Governor LePage signed an executive order establishing the Task Force on Expanding Early Post-Secondary Access for High School Students in Maine. The task force will soon release a report of initial findings, but intends to continue its work to expand access to early college opportunities.

At the other end of the age spectrum, the state missed out on a federal Race to the Top grant aimed at improving early childhood programming, but state officials intend to move ahead with as much of the proposed work as possible, including the development of a permanent inter-agency working group devoted to coordinating early childhood policies and practices.

Each of these efforts represents a significant step toward a more fully aligned educational system from early childhood into adulthood.

Goal: Maine students are able to move easily through a learner-centered educational system fully integrated from early childhood through adulthood.

Objective: Eliminate as many policy and operational barriers as possible that block access to educational options .

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Collaboration and Communication	Move forward with structural and other reforms as outlined in the state's recent Race to the Top Early Childhood Challenge grant.	Maine DOE, Maine DHHS and stakeholders	Progress report due July 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Create the Education Coordinating Committee's college transitions working group; complete working group's initial report to the ECC regarding college and career readiness initiatives.	Maine DOE, higher education institutions, Education Coordinating Committee (ECC)	Interim report due to ECC May 1, 2012
Policy	Implement the initial findings of the governor's early post-secondary opportunities task force; support the ongoing work of the task force.	Maine DOE, early post-secondary task force	Task force interim report under development

Coordinated and Effective State Support**2. Adequate and equitable state resources for Maine's schools**

Under Maine's Constitution, it is the state's "several towns" that are required to "make suitable provision, at their own expense, for the support and maintenance of public schools." A significant state role in K-12 education is essential, however, to ensure that all of Maine's young people, regardless of zip code, have equal access to a good education.

The state supports Maine schools in two ways. First, the state provides a considerable amount of funding to local schools in the form of General Purpose Aid for local schools (GPA), from which local schools are funded. For the 2012-2013 school year, state GPA funding is budgeted to total more than \$900 million.

What constitutes the appropriate level of state funding for schools (and how that funding is then distributed to the state's school districts) is a subject of constant debate in Augusta. Last legislative session, a proposal was put forward to have an independent study of Maine's school funding commissioned, and such a study should be undertaken as soon as sufficient funding can be found to finance it.

Maine's schools are also supported by the state Department of Education, which provides resources and support to Maine's schools as well as undertaking various regulatory duties as required by state and federal law. A recent study of the Department, however, undertaken by the Council of Chief State School Officers, found that the agency lacked much of the capacity it needed to effectively support Maine's schools and school districts. The state's school and district leaders have echoed this finding, stating that they would like to see the Department become more effective in its support and assistance.

An opportunity for a full-scale review of the Department's work is coming in the form of Governor LePage's zero-based budget initiative, which will require state agencies to review all programs and practices in a search for efficiencies and improved levels of service. The Department should partner with stakeholders as part of this effort to review the work of the agency and provide suggestions for improvement.

The Department's staff is already at work reviewing internal operating procedures and practices, with the goal of improving efficiencies and customer service.

Goal: Maine's schools are supported by adequate and effective state resources.

Objective: Undertake an independent review of the state school funding system; continue ongoing work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the state Department of Education in providing technical and other kinds of support.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Undertake an independent review of the state school funding system; propose potential policy changes, if any, to the next legislature.	Maine DOE, Maine Legislature	Complete report by January 1, 2013
Policy	Use zero-based budget initiative to further review and assess Maine DOE programs and processes; propose reforms in the next biennial budget bill	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	Proposed reforms to be included in next biennial budget bill

Coordinated and Effective State Support

3. Comprehensive integration of technology

Since the deployment of the state's one-to-one computing initiative a decade ago, Maine has been a leader in the integration of technology and education. There remain, however, far greater opportunities to employ technology to improve learner outcomes.

As addressed elsewhere in this plan, online and distance learning options can provide students with additional opportunities to achieve and demonstrate proficiencies. Additionally, new computer-based assessment tools can provide educators with real-time information on student achievement, allowing teachers to adapt instructional practices to meet the needs of learners. New data tools, such as the State Longitudinal Data System, will be able to track learner growth over time, and as schools move to a proficiency-based system of schooling, advanced new student information systems will allow educators to track the achievement, by each student, of multiple learning outcomes.

Effective implementation of information technology can be a cost saver as well. Public education is a remarkably paperwork-intensive business and commonly used documents such as Individualized Education Plans, which could and should be created digitally, are too often drafted on paper even now. Significant cost savings could be realized if more modern data and information technology systems were put into place. This is especially true with regard to information and data systems at the state level, where effective implementation and integration of data systems has been an issue.

There are cultural changes that need to take place as well. As technology continues to transform modern life, schools, to remain relevant, must also use technology in transformative ways. Too often, educators and administrators have seen technology as an add-on or supplement, whose primary function was to support more traditional instructional and administrative practices. In the years to come, significant work must be done to more fully and comprehensively integrate technology into the everyday work of schools and districts—to take technology integration to the “next level.”

The first step in all this would be for the Department to undertake a detailed review of current data and technology initiatives and needs, both at the state and local level, with an eye toward developing an information technology “comprehensive plan.” Efforts must be made within the Department itself to better coordinate and integrate various technology projects. The Department should also work with IT directors in Maine schools to identify training and support needs.

Goal: Information and instructional technologies are supporting instructional practice and efficient school system operations.

Objective: Develop a “comprehensive plan” for technology integration, both in Maine’s schools and school districts and at the Maine DOE, developed in collaboration with IT personnel and educators across the state.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Develop comprehensive inventory of ongoing technology and data projects and initiatives, with current status on each.	Maine DOE	March 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Survey school unit IT directors and administrators regarding technology and data needs; use responses to develop detailed data and technology support plan.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	September 1, 2012

Coordinated and Effective State Support

4. A robust and transparent accountability and improvement system

Ensuring that education policies and programs at both the state and local levels are effective requires a robust, transparent accountability and improvement system that tracks the growth and achievement of every learner. The accountability system employed by the state today, designed to comply with the federal No Child Left Behind Act, has a number of flaws. It does not measure the growth and achievement of each learner individually, but establishes the success or failure of educators, schools and school districts by comparing this year’s class of fourth graders, for instance, to last year’s class. The system does not recognize that learners not only come to school in different places developmentally, but that they advance through their educational careers at different paces as well. Rather than using multiple measures of student achievement, the current system judges success or failure based on a single score on a single assessment at a single moment in time.

With the U.S. Department of Education expressing a willingness to allow states flexibility with regard to the accountability provisions of No Child Left Behind, Maine should undertake the effort to design and implement a comprehensive accountability structure focused on learner growth and achievement, one that uses multiple measures of learner proficiency tracked over time. Such a system should also fairly but readily identify underperforming schools, and ensure deployment of targeted and worthwhile assistance and support.

Goal: An effective school and district accountability and improvement system helps Maine’s schools meet the needs of all learners.

Objective: As part of the federal NCLB waiver process, develop a rigorous and transparent state-based accountability and improvement system that makes use of multiple measures, tracks learner growth and achievement over time, publicly reports that achievement, and holds educators, schools and school systems to account.

Action Steps:

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Develop a plan for the design and implementation of a new state accountability system consistent with the principles of the NCLB flexibility package.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	Waiver application due February 21, 2012; implementation to follow

Appendix 2

Common Core ELA and mathematics implementation plans

CCSS for ELA Implementation in Maine

Implementing the Common Core State Standards for ELA will be a multi-year, multi-phased process. Immediately upon adoption of the CCSS, the State's implementation plan was launched (see below). This plan includes three phases:

Phase 1: Introduction to the CCSS for ELA (2010-2012)

Phase 2: Alignment of Curriculum and Instruction to the CCSS for ELA (2011-2013)

Phase 3: Implementing the CCSS for ELA: Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment (2012-2014)

Recognizing that Maine school systems will be in different places with respect to implementation, the school years indicated for work in these phases overlap, with the ultimate goal being that all Maine school systems will reach full implementation by the 2014-15 school year. In Maine, "full implementation" is intended to include administration of assessments based on CCSS in the 2014-2015 school year. Full implementation of curriculum and instruction aligned to the CCSS will be completed by June 2014.

Maine CCSS for ELA Transition Timeline

Phase 1

Introduction to Common Core State Standards: Getting Familiar 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 School Years

The goals for this phase of the implementation plan included the following:

- Develop understanding of the impetus for and development of the CCSS for ELA, including college and career readiness, rigor, and 21st Century learning
- Explore the big ideas (shifts) and concepts that influence the interpretation of the standards, such as text complexity, academic vocabulary, and integration across strands
- Become familiar with the content of the CCSS and the supporting appendices for ELA

Activities to support this phase:

- **Creation of CCSS for ELA web pages on Maine DOE ELA home site** where CCSS documents for ELA (standards and appendices) were posted in summer of 2010. <http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/standards.html>. These navigation of these documents was further refined during the 2010-11 school year to enable easier access to the K-5 and 6-12 standards, specific standard strands (e.g. reading, writing, listening/speaking, and language) as well as portions of the CCSS for ELA introduction and appendices that support the specific strands. Additionally, Maine's CCSS for ELA website was further refined to include a resource section to support the phases of implementation (Phase 1: Introduction; Phase 2: Alignment; Phase 3: Implementation). As presentations, resources, and other materials are developed, they are posted under the appropriate phase of implementation for the field to access.

- **Presentation of regional and school system workshops to introduce Maine educators to the CCSS for ELA.** During the Fall of 2010 through the Spring of 2011, the MDOE ELA content specialists provided a variety of introductory workshops to school systems across Maine. These included:
 - 4 day-long, regionally based workshop sessions for K-12 educators to introduce the ELA CCSS to educators from across Maine. Approximately 200 educators attended each of the regionally held sessions. Educators had the opportunity to explore the organization and structure of the standards and the supporting appendices in the first half of the workshop, and then broke into K-5 and 6-12 span groups to learn about the specific standards for their grade levels.
 - The ELA Content Specialist provided a variety of workshops designed to provide introduction to the CCSS for ELA to school systems, regional professional learning networks, and statewide education organizations during the 2010-11 school year. These workshops ranged in length from 3-6 hours each depending upon the setting. The power points used in these workshop sessions were posted on the ELA homepage so that all Maine educators would have access to them.
 - The ELA Content Specialists met with the 8 regional superintendent groups throughout the 2010-11 school year, providing an overview of the CCSS for ELA and planning for next steps. Additionally, regular updates on CCSS for ELA implementation activities are communicate by the MDOE regional representatives who meet with the regional superintendents and curriculum leaders on a monthly basis.
 - The ELA Content Specialists provided training in the ELA CCSS to the 25 facilitators of MDOE's Literacy Leaders' Network. In turn, these facilitators provided two workshop sessions related to the ELA CCSS in each of the 20 Literacy Leader Network meeting locations during the 2010-11 school year, reaching another 400 K-5 educators.
- **Development and presentation of a CCSS for ELA Introductory Webinar Series.** The ELA content specialists developed a series of webinars related to introducing the ELA CCSS that were provided throughout the 2010-11 school year. The differences between the CCSS and Maine's previous ELA standards were highlighted and suggestions for beginning implementation activities were provided. Each webinar has been archived and is posted on the ELA homepage for educators to access.
http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/online_pd.html
- **Development of resources to support study of CCSS for ELA.** During the 2010-11 school year, MDOE Content Specialists developed and posted an array of tools and resources for Maine educators to use to introduce themselves to the CCSS for ELA.
<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/guided-study.html>

- **Regular communications about the CCSS for ELA via the MDOE’s ELA List Serv and *Literacy Links* newsletter.** MDOE ELA content specialists regularly post information about the Common Core State Standards for ELA on the ELA listserv, through *Literacy Links*, and on the ELA homepage. Several editions of the 2010-11 *Literacy Links* series, sent monthly to approximately 1,500 Maine educators, introduced the strands of the CCSS for ELA and provided resources for learning more about each strand. Literacy Links Monthly Newsletters:
<http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/newsletters/index.html>

Phase 2

Alignment of Curriculum and Instruction to the CCSS for ELA 2011-12 and 2012-2013 School Years

The goals for this phase of the implementation plan include the following:

- Deepen educator understanding of the shifts required by the CCSS for ELA, such as text complexity, writing from sources, academic vocabulary, literacy standards across content areas, etc.
- Provide resources for examining local curricula to determine alignment and gaps, including documentation of professional learning needs
- Provide tools for evaluating current instructional materials and practices to insure alignment to CCSS for ELA
- Connect K-12 CCSS for ELA implementation to higher education and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

Activities to support this phase:

- **Presentation of regional and school system workshops for Maine educators and organizations to support understanding of the ELA shifts and curriculum alignment for the CCSS for ELA.** ELA content specialists continued to provide site-based, school district workshops and technical assistance as requested, as well as workshops and presentations for statewide organizations and institutions of higher education. These sessions included content from introductory sessions described above, but also extended to focus on assistance with the CCSS shifts for ELA, as well as the curriculum alignment and introduction to the Smarter Balanced Assessment system. Examples of workshops include:
 - Partnering with the University of Southern Maine to present a series of CCSS workshops during the Winter and Spring of 2012
 - Partnering with ASCD to provide regional workshops during the Fall of 2011 and Spring of 2012
 - Partnering with Navigating the Real World to present regional workshops during the Fall of 2011 and Spring of 2012
 - Partnering with professional organizations such as Maine Council for English Language Arts, Maine Principals Association, Maine Education Association, and

Maine Association for Directors of Special Education to provide professional development for their members

- Providing workshops for faculty members from the University of Maine at Farmington, as well as through the Literacy Faculty Group meetings held quarterly with members of the literacy faculty from Maine's colleges and universities that have teacher preparation programs.
- Embedding CCSS for ELA implementation content in the 2011-12 Literacy Leaders Network series.

- **Development and presentation of CCSS for ELA Webinar Series focused on the ELA Shifts and Strands.** The ELA content specialists developed a series of webinars related to literacy strands and shifts required by the CCSS for ELA that were provided throughout the 2011-12 school year. Each webinar has been archived and is posted on the ELA homepage for educators to access.

http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/online_pd.html

- **Development of open education resources (OERs) to support understanding of the ELA strands and shifts in the CCSS for ELA.** During the 2011-12 school year, MDOE Content Specialists developed and posted an array of tools and resources for Maine educators related to the CCSS for ELA strands and shifts. Examples of these resources include:

- Tools for unpacking standards and for engaging in curriculum alignment, including comparative charts for reading and writing across disciplines at the 6-12 span

http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss_modules.html

Reading Standards 6-12 - Comparative Chart by Anchor

Writing Standards 6-12 - Comparative Chart by Anchor

- Resources related to ELA Shifts in Practice, including specific resources for text complexity.
http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss_modules.html
- Literacy Micro-courses that provide self-guided study of the foundational reading skills, vocabulary, and comprehension for educators across the K-5 span.
<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/lmc.html>
- In partnership with the New England Comprehensive Center (NECC), the MDOE developed a tool to support K-12 educators in reviewing instructional materials for their alignment to the CCSS for ELA, and is currently developing a curriculum companion tool to assist K-12 educators with curriculum alignment to the CCSS for ELA.

- **Regular communications about the CCSS for ELA via the MDOE's ELA List Serv and *Literacy Links* newsletter.** MDOE ELA content specialists regularly post information about the Common Core State Standards for ELA on the ELA listserv,

through *Literacy Links*, and on the ELA homepage. Again in 2011-12, the *Literacy Links* series, sent monthly to approximately 1,500 Maine educators, detailed the strands of the CCSS for ELA and provided resources for learning more about each strand. Literacy Links Monthly Newsletters:

<http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/newsletters/index.html>

- **English Language Arts SCASS.** The ELA content specialists joined the CCSSO ELA SCASS to collaborate with 10 other states to support transition to CCSS. Implementation resources are developed by SCASS member states and shared across the states. In 2011-12, focus of the ELA SCASS was on text complexity tools and professional development resources which are now being used by MDOE ELA specialists as they work with Maine educators and are available on the MDOE ELA website.
- **Early Learning Guidelines Alignment.** During 2011-12, the ELA content specialists worked with the MDOE's early childhood learning specialists and a stakeholder group to begin the process of aligning Maine's early literacy guidelines for birth-5 with the CCSS for ELA. This work will continue into the 2012-13 school year and will include professional development components to support early childhood educators' understanding of the CCSS for ELA.
- **Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.** During 2011-12, the ELA content specialists began service on Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium workgroups. One ELA specialist is serving on the Item and Performance Task workgroup, lending expertise to the development of the SBAC ELA item and task specifications and reviewing stimuli and items being developed. This work will inform support that will be provided to Maine school systems as they engage in curriculum alignment and transition to the SBAC system. The other ELA content specialist is serving as a Teacher Involvement Coordinator for the MDOE. In this role, she is recruiting Maine educators to work on SBAC ELA item development and review, enabling Maine educators to become increasingly familiar with the SBAC system.
- **Maine Statewide Literacy Plan.** During 2011-12, the MDOE wrote and finalized its comprehensive, statewide literacy plan, *Literacy for ME*, which will guide the MDOE's literacy related work moving forward. Included in this plan are specific recommendations and components related to the CCSS standards and curriculum alignment for ELA, as well as instruction, assessment, and professional learning, including transition to CCSS. <http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/literacy/>
- **Institutions of Higher Education.** MDOE ELA Content Specialists participated in a full day workshop with IHE to identify transition issues and needs. This day provided opportunity to educate IHE faculty and staff about the CCSS and to identify ways in which the MDOE can support IHE in making the transition to the CCSS.
- Week long training of DOE team with WIDA to understand CCSS and ELL

Phase 3
Implementing the CCSS for ELA: Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment
2012-13 and 2013-2014 School Years

The goals for this phase of the implementation plan include the following:

- Continue to provide ongoing professional development focused on the shifts required by the CCSS for ELA and on curriculum and instruction alignment
- Provide ongoing professional learning and resources to assist in transition to Smarter Balanced Assessment System
- *Insure school system capacity to finalize and implement local curricula aligned to CCSS for ELA and connected to Smarter Balanced Assessment System*

Activities to support this phase:

- **Presentation of regional and school system workshops for Maine educators and organizations to support understanding of the ELA shifts and curriculum alignment for the CCSS for ELA.** ELA content specialists continued to provide site-based, school district workshops and technical assistance as requested, as well as workshops and presentations for statewide organizations and institutions of higher education. These sessions included content from introductory sessions described above, but also extended to focus on assistance with the CCSS shifts for ELA, as well as the curriculum alignment and introduction to the Smarter Balanced Assessment system. Examples of workshops include:
 - Partnering with the University of Southern Maine and the Maine Association of Special Education Directors to present a multi-day literacy institute focused on assisting Maine school systems in developing and refining CCSS for ELA implementation plans. The institute will support approximately 40 school systems (300 educators).
<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/professionaldevelopment.html#events>
 - Providing site-based, school district workshops and technical assistance as requested to support alignment and instruction needs related to CCSS for ELA implementation.
 - Providing a Cross Discipline Literacy Network to support K-12 educators with professional learning opportunities via face-to-face regional networking sessions and a literacy strand webinar series. Webinars will focus on the CCSS ELA Shifts as well as the literacy standards across the disciplines. MDOE ELA content specialists will lead this work in partnership with content specialists from other disciplines, such as math, social studies, science, and visual and performing arts. Content specialists will work collaboratively with Maine educators who have content and literacy expertise to develop the webinars and face-to-face content for the network. This will result in building capacity in regional locations by training trainers who can then train other educators in their regions. The network is projected to serve approximately 800 Maine educators.

- Developing and hosting additional institute opportunities to address CCSS for ELA implementation needs.
- Partnering with professional organizations to expand access to training and technical assistance
- **Development and presentation of a CCSS for ELA Webinar Series focused on the ELA Shifts, Curriculum Alignment, and Smarter Balanced Assessment Considerations.** The ELA content specialists will develop a series of webinars related to ELA shifts, curriculum alignment, and the Smarter Balanced Assessment system that will be delivered during the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years. Webinars will be archived and posted on the ELA homepage for educators to access.
- **Continue development of open education resources (OERs) to support understanding of the ELA shifts in the CCSS, curriculum alignment, and instructional alignment.** During the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years, MDOE Content Specialists will continue to develop and post an array of tools and resources for Maine educators to use related to CCSS for ELA shifts, alignment, instruction, and assessment. Additionally, the ELA content specialists will expand digital resources through the Maine Laptop Technology Initiative and other partnerships including SBAC, SCASS, ASCELA, NCTE, and others.
- **Regular communications about the CCSS for ELA via the MDOE's ELA List Serv and *Literacy Links* newsletter.** MDOE ELA content specialists will continue to regularly post information about the Common Core State Standards for ELA on the ELA listserv, through *Literacy Links*, and on the ELA homepage. In 2012-13, the *Literacy Links* series, sent monthly to approximately 1,500 Maine educators, will focus on the ELA shifts and feature specific tools for curriculum alignment.
- **English Language Arts SCASS.** The ELA content specialists will continue their work in the CCSSO ELA SCASS to develop implementation resources for the CCSS for ELA.
- **Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.** During 2012-14, the ELA content specialists will continue working on the development of the Smarter Balanced Assessment system in partnership with other SBAC state consultants and will continue to involve Maine educators in item authoring and review opportunities. Additionally, work will commence through workshops, webinars, and resource development to support educator understanding of the SBAC system and its connection to instruction.
- **Maine Statewide Literacy Plan.** During 2012-13, the MDOE will begin implementation of its comprehensive, statewide literacy plan, *Literacy for ME*. Several initial implementation components include the development of an electronic toolkit to guide local comprehensive literacy planning that will include resources related to the CCSS for ELA, instruction, assessment, and professional learning. Additionally, a series of

regional meetings will be held to support local comprehensive planning efforts and these sessions for provide opportunities to connect educators to CCSS for ELA resources via the electronic toolkit, and to emphasize the role of the CCSS for support high levels of literacy achievement through collaborative efforts across the birth-adult span.

- **Institutions of Higher Education.** MDOE ELA Content Specialists will partner with IHE to assist with the revision of pre-service teacher training programs to insure alignment with the CCSS for ELA.

Common Core State Standards in Mathematics

Awareness:

During the 2010-2011 school year MDOE held various workshops across the state, hosted by districts, regional curriculum groups, and higher education, to inform the field of the new standards and where to find information and support. A webpage for mathematics information was developed and located at: <http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/standards.html>

The mathematics specialists also presented at various regional superintendent meetings and CTE director meetings across the state.

Transition:

MDOE in collaboration with the Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Maine (ATOMIM) offered a series of Dine and Discuss Sessions focusing on developing a deep understanding of the 8 Mathematical Practices in the 2010-2011 school year. During the 2011-2012 school year the Dine and Discuss Sessions target two audiences, elementary with a focus on algebraic thinking and the common core standards, and high school with a focus on reasoning and sense making and the common core standards.

Implementation:

A webinar series was also created and delivered to address alignment and implementation. These webinars and resource materials are posted at the following site for the field to access: http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss_pd.html

Presentations by DOE at the annual ATOMIM conference were focused on implementation of the CCSS using the critical focus areas and also aligning tasks to the mathematical practice, mathematical content and content literacy standards.

Ongoing PD:

During the 2012-2013 school year, DOE and ATOMIM will again be offering Dine and Discuss sessions across the state focusing on the Common Core standards. This year we will be looking at sample tasks from SBAC and the Illustrative Mathematics Project to help inform changes in instructional practices. A second topic of Dine and Discuss sessions will be to look to the NCSM support materials around the 8 Mathematical Practices and how they can be used in classrooms to help support student/teacher understanding.

MDOE mathematics specialists and MDOE MLTI will collaboratively provide full day PD sessions across the state looking at sample tasks and use of technology to support student learning and

understanding addressing content, pedagogy and technology knowledge. The sessions will be provided for the elementary, middle school, and high school level.

As with all PD, the materials used during the sessions provided will be posted on the department webpage.

Common Core State Standards Noteshare Notebooks:

There are 4 interactive notebooks organized by grade spans K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and High School. Contained in each of these interactive notebooks are professional development support materials for teachers to aid in the understanding and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

As a classroom teacher, time is limited for searching out support materials to gain a deep understanding of the new standards and how to align these to current classroom practices and curriculum. These notebooks have embedded links to resources in the appropriate place within the standards document. As teachers read through the document they have all the links to resources, webinars, and hands-on activities for supporting the transition to and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

There will be a series of webinars/PD sessions to inform teachers of this resource and how to best use the resource in their work at their district/classroom level. All PD opportunities will encourage all teachers of mathematics, Special Education and ELL, to attend and participate. These notebooks will be posted on the DOE website in two versions – one for Mac users and one for non-Mac users.

Appendix 3

“Global Best Practices Toolkit”

GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES



A SPECIAL THANKS

The authors of this tool would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the New England Secondary School Consortium Council, our regional steering committee, for the support and leadership it has provided during the first year of our existence. As champions for the vision, mission, and goals of the Consortium, our Council has been instrumental in making our work—including this resource—a success.

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ABOUT THIS TOOL

Global Best Practices: An Internationally Benchmarked Self-Assessment Tool for Secondary Learning is a practical, action-oriented tool for teachers, school administrators, superintendents, school boards, parents, and other members of a school community. The tool grew out of a recognition that national borders no longer define the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that students need for success, and that New England's high schools may need assistance reviewing learning standards, organizational structures, leadership models, teaching strategies, professional development, and student outcomes in relation to research on high-performing educational systems and practices. *Global Best Practices* is a first step toward defining, in detail, the characteristics of effective 21st century education and applying them to the creation of new models of teaching, learning, and leading in today's high schools.

This tool distills some common characteristics of high-performing schools in the United States and abroad, and presents them in a concise, user-friendly format. Rather than give school leaders and teachers a simple list of recommendations, the tool offers a practical, step-by-step process that schools can use to assess their relative performance in key areas and shape their school-improvement plans. *Global Best Practices* is intended to make this important research more accessible and useful to the schools and educators of New England.

Global Best Practices will be revised and updated as new research and strategies emerge, and as we receive feedback from practitioners who are using the tool in their schools. If you have recommendations for strengthening this resource, we strongly encourage you to submit suggestions to gbpfeedback@newenglandssc.org.

STRANDS + DIMENSIONS

Global Best Practices is organized into three main strands, each with its own subsections, or dimensions. The strands identify broad areas of focus that every school community should address in its improvement work, while the numbered dimensions are intended to guide in-depth investigations into specific issues or strategies. Each dimension includes comprehensive descriptions that define the concept being explored, as well as a selection of sample strategies and evidence to provide relevant examples of specific policies, practices, and outcomes that schools can consider and reflect on.

- 1.1 Equity
- 1.2 Personalization + Relevance
- 1.3 Academic Expectations
- 1.4 Standards-Based Education
- 1.5 Assessment Practices
- 1.6 International + Multicultural Learning
- 1.7 Technology Integration
- 1.8 Learning Communities

ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN

- 2.1 Vision, Mission + Action Plan
- 2.2 School Culture
- 2.3 Multiple Pathways
- 2.4 Transitions
- 2.5 Interventions + Support
- 2.6 Time + Space
- 2.7 Data Systems + Applications
- 2.8 Continual Improvement

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

- 3.1 Teacher Recruitment + Retention
- 3.2 Administrative Leadership
- 3.3 Shared Leadership
- 3.4 Moral Courage

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Global Best Practices is a comprehensive tool designed to equip schools with a thoughtful process for in-depth professional and institutional self-reflection. While schools are encouraged to work through all twenty dimensions in this resource, it is not necessary to tackle the entire process all at once. Schools may choose a particular strand—such as Teaching + Learning, for example—or a selection of dimensions relevant to their action plan, and then work through these sections first. The process can also be broken up over multiple months, semesters, or years. The most important thing is that schools use this document in ways that work best for them—there is no “right” or “wrong” way to use this tool.

The pages that follow are intentionally structured to be simple, straightforward, and easy to follow. Each numbered dimension offers a detailed profile of a foundational concept or strategy, and a four-step process schools can follow to investigate and reflect on their performance in a particular area. The instructions here will walk your school through the four steps.

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

In Step 1, schools review descriptions of the three performance levels. Keep in mind that these performance levels are merely concise profiles of high schools at various stages of a school-improvement process. Your school may closely resemble one of the descriptions (or it may not), or it could be implementing different elements of all three levels. The purpose of this step is not to force your school into any one category, but to provoke thoughtful, self-reflective faculty discussions about where your school is on a school-improvement continuum. At this time, the educators engaged in the self-assessment can pose questions to one another, take notes, and identify data, documents, or other resources that should be consulted to provide a more detailed picture of what your school is or is not doing in the dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

In Step 2, schools are provided a list of sample research-based strategies for school improvement. In some cases, your school may already be implementing one or more of the sample strategies; in others, none of the strategies will apply. The list is intended to give schools a sense of the kinds of organizational or instructional practices that are aligned with the dimension and help to explain it in greater detail. These examples offer a range of potential strategies schools might consider if it is determined that work needs to be undertaken in a particular area. Once the list has been reviewed and discussed (either in multiple small groups or as a large group), schools record the specific strategies being implemented in their school to improve student outcomes, instructional quality, or organizational effectiveness in the dimension. We recommend that schools describe the major features of a strategy (i.e., what makes it effective) when recording it during Step 2. If the space provided is insufficient, schools can record their strategies on a separate sheet of paper.

A NEW ENGLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL CONSORTIUM RESOURCE

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

In Step 3, schools review a list of sample evidence that illustrates the kind of data or outcomes schools should look for to determine if school-improvement strategies have had a positive impact on student performance or the school itself. It is not enough to have implemented a strategy; schools need to know how strategies are impacting students. Again, your school may already be seeing the kinds of results reflected in the list or it may not—the examples are merely intended to give schools a general sense of the types of evidence, whether quantitative or qualitative, they might want to consider or investigate to assess progress in the dimension. It is important that schools strive to record only objective, empirical data and evidence, not subjective perceptions or wishful thinking. If, for example, the sample evidence refers to student surveys, and your school has not conducted student surveys, participating educators should not fill in the blank space with what they may believe to be the case. Anecdotal evidence may be sufficient if confirmed by multiple individuals and supported by several specific examples. If your school does not have any concrete evidence of performance or progress in the dimension, then the next step may be a collective decision to consider collecting and tracking relevant data. The goal of this step is to determine what your school already knows—or needs to find out—about your performance in a given area.

SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

In Step 4, schools reflect on the performance descriptions, strategies, and evidence they have reviewed and discussed, and then place themselves on the continuum of school improvement described in the dimension. The score recorded for your school should reflect a collective consensus that has resulted from an open, honest, and frank discussion. One option is to bring together a representative cross-section of school staff and ask them to complete a self-assessment individually. After all the scores are compiled, determine the mean score and discuss, as a group, why different individuals came up with different scores. Keep in mind that a self-assessment score is not a perfect measure of performance in the dimension, but only a useful guide when engaging in the substantive work of school improvement. If you determine that your school is on the lower end of the continuum, don't be disheartened—a low score should not be seen as evidence of failure or a cause for blame, just as a higher score should not become an excuse to rest on your laurels and stop learning and growing as a community of professionals.

A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

This tool does not provide an exhaustive list of performance evidence or strategies, and the descriptions are only intended to be representative, not all-inclusive. Many examples of effective teaching and learning are not represented in these pages—not because they are unimportant, but because of the limitations of formatting and page space.

The sections and dimensions in this tool focus attention on a selection of important concepts and high-impact areas to provide schools with a logical structure and process to follow. Obviously, real schools are not neatly organized into clear categories, educational research is unable to take every influence and factor into account, and systemic school-improvement never unfolds according to a perfectly charted step-by-step process. Schools are complex, interdependent learning communities with unique qualities and characteristics, strengths and weaknesses, teachers and students—which means that no tool or process, no matter how well devised, will be able to anticipate or address every need.

Global Best Practices is a research-based tool that is guided by an unwavering belief in educational equity—giving every student a fair chance to succeed in life. The tool assumes that every graduate should leave high school equipped with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind needed to succeed in a four-year postsecondary-degree program and in the globally competitive careers of the 21st century. By proceeding on this assumption, the Consortium is not advocating that students be forced to attend college or that enrolling in college is the best choice for every student. Rather, we are advocating that secondary schools apply universally high standards and expectations regardless of a student's background or professed aspirations. Since few adolescents know what they want to do with their lives, and few adults, for that matter, can confidently say that they knew their educational and career path at the age of fourteen, it is our belief that high schools should endeavor to expand life opportunities for students, not foreclose on them prematurely.

While many educators and policy makers have recently begun emphasizing the importance of international benchmarking, there is still no consensus on the precise definition of this term or how international benchmarking can be effectively conducted in high schools. In this tool, both domestic and international research studies were considered, and the descriptions and strategies presented in these pages are an attempt to distill the most relevant findings. Instead of simply importing international research with little thought given to the particular characteristics of American schools, we have made efforts to translate this research in ways that will be familiar to American educators. Just as a literal translation of a foreign-language text will produce a clunky, unreadable document, we have endeavored to convert research findings into logical guidance that is appropriate to American educational contexts. And given the vagaries of cultural context, educational research conducted in the United States will be the most relevant to American schools. For more information about the research that informs this tool, consult the *Global Best Practices* literature review.

USING THE PRIORITY GUIDE

Once your school has completed a section or worked through all twenty of the individual self-assessments, you can use the priority guide on this page to help determine school-improvement priorities and next steps. The guide is merely a graphical aid that will give schools a visual overview of how each individual self-assessment was scored, which can be helpful in determining priorities—if a school scores lower in one dimension than another, it may indicate a weakness or need that should be addressed. The scoring scale used throughout this tool is not an absolute measure of performance, and school leaders must be thoughtful and judicious when determining school priorities as they consider numerous contextual, political, financial, and personal factors that extend well beyond the purview of this tool.

	LOWER PRIORITY					HIGHER PRIORITY		
	5	4	3	2	1	NA		
1.1 Equity								
1.2 Personalization + Relevance								
1.3 Academic Expectations								
1.4 Standards-Based Education								
1.5 Assessment Practices								
1.6 International + Multicultural Learning								
1.7 Technology Integration								
1.8 Learning Communities								
ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN	5	4	3	2	1	NA		
2.1 Vision, Mission + Action Plan								
2.2 School Culture								
2.3 Multiple Pathways								
2.4 Transitions								
2.5 Interventions + Support								
2.6 Time + Space								
2.7 Data Systems + Applications								
2.8 Continual Improvement								
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	5	4	3	2	1	NA		
3.1 Teacher Recruitment + Retention								
3.2 Administrative Leadership								
3.3 Shared Leadership								
3.4 Moral Courage								

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	<p>Academic, social, and aspirational inequities across the student body may have been identified, but no formal or strategic actions have been undertaken to address them. Underperforming students (defined as performing below grade level) typically fail to catch up to their peers, and school data indicate that these students generally come from economically, socially, or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. The school's courses, curricula, and instruction do not promote common high expectations for all students. The academic program is a complex hierarchy of tiered tracks and teachers are not trained in classroom differentiation or other personalization strategies. Student performance and behavioral data are collected and reviewed at the school level, but individual and student-subgroup data are not disaggregated or analyzed. While all students have access to enriching school activities and co-curricular programs, actual participation patterns reveal that disadvantaged students participate at significantly lower rates. Some staff members, parents, and community members display considerable resistance to adopting strategies that would promote a more equitable school structure.</p>
3	<p>Inequities across the student body are monitored regularly, at least annually. The school is beginning to use disaggregated data and formative assessments to identify individual student needs. The school offers some support opportunities to academically struggling students, but interventions are not systemic or integrated into regular courses. Some academic tracks have been eliminated, but barriers to accessing higher-level courses remain in place. A small number of staff, parents, and community members remain resistant to adopting strategies that promote greater equity. Participation in enriching school activities and co-curricular programs is relatively consistent across the student body, including those students who may have formerly been disengaged. Student voice and personalization are considered when programs are developed or refined.</p>
5	<p>The school community has embraced the belief that all students can succeed. Teachers actively promote positive self-images and high academic expectations for all students. Every student is enrolled in academically rigorous, college-preparatory courses, and the school does not offer "watered-down" or outdated courses that do not prepare students for success in college or modern careers. Classroom instruction goes beyond more traditional didactic practices to include personalized, student-centered strategies that engage and support diverse learning styles. Course expectations—including those for assignments, assessments, and grading—are explicit and public. A coherent system of performance monitoring and student interventions promotes academic acceleration (not traditional remediation) for both underperforming and high-performing students. A variety of academic options and graduation pathways provide opportunities for students to participate in the design of their own personalized educational experiences.</p>

SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

	<p>Enroll all students in untracked, heterogeneously grouped classes, and train all teachers in differentiated instruction and the use of formative assessment to identify and meet individual learning needs.</p> <p>Leverage additional school resources—whether human, financial, material, instructional, or experiential—to help overcome the disadvantages of social background for underperforming, at-risk, and minority students, including pairing the most effective and experienced teachers with the most underprivileged students.</p> <p>Remove barriers (such as prerequisites) that might prevent or discourage students from taking more challenging courses (including Advance Placement or International Baccalaureate options) or meeting basic admission requirements for college prior to graduation.</p> <p>Create a coherent system of interventions to ensure that struggling students receive the academic and personal support they need to not only perform at grade level, but also to succeed in higher-level courses (e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, co-curricular activities).</p> <p>Regularly communicate with all parents—particularly parents from low-income or other disadvantaged households—while proactively encouraging their participation in school governance, activities, and programs.</p> <p>Establish a school-wide system for monitoring student performance and socialization issues, and have guidance counselors work closely with teachers to provide practical and timely college and career guidance to all students.</p>	
	<p>OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION</p>	

	<p>No significant achievement or aspiration gaps exist among students from different cultural, racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, linguistic, or special-needs backgrounds.</p> <p>Underperforming ninth-grade students are performing at or above grade level by the end of tenth grade.</p> <p>Student participation in electives, higher-level courses, and co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities is consistent across all student subgroups.</p> <p>College-enrollment rates are high, even among first-generation students from families with no college-going history.</p>	
	<p>OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION</p>	

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	Teachers use a limited repertoire of instructional strategies. Curriculum design and lesson planning reflect whole-group learning targets with little personalization or differentiation. The school is not organized to provide personalized learning or mitigate performance gaps, and teachers do not have timely access to data on individual student learning needs or progress. In-depth inquiry, student collaboration, and the application of real-world skills are absent from most courses and lessons.
3	The school's vision and mission have been revised to reflect a school-wide commitment to serving all students. Teachers are actively learning about personalization and differentiation. Most teachers have received professional development and support for using formative assessments, new learning technologies, and student-centered strategies that can help identify student needs and increase academic personalization. Courses are still fairly traditional, classroom-based experiences, but teachers are beginning to use instructional practices proven to engage diverse types of learners. The school has implemented an advisory structure for students, but both students and teachers report that the time is not being used effectively.
5	The faculty has made a bold public commitment to creating a student-centered culture and learning environment, and personalized instructional strategies designed to meet the intellectual, developmental, social, and emotional needs of every student reflect this commitment. Teachers regularly review student data to diagnose learning needs and improve instructional practice. The school has implemented systems (such as advisories) that help teachers get to know their students well. The school provides a variety of curriculum options, universal access to digital technologies, and multiple learning pathways both within and outside of the classroom. Students take a proactive role in designing their own education and planning for future learning. By using personal learning plans, portfolios, rubrics, online course-management tools, or other strategies, teachers help students manage their own educational experience. Teachers and school leaders regularly communicate with parents, encourage their involvement in the academic life of their children, and use Web-based tools to ensure that parents are knowledgeable about their children's academic progress. Classroom instruction emphasizes real-world concepts and applications, including hands-on learning, problem solving, research, technological literacy, and current national and international issues.

SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

<p>Ensure that all courses, syllabi, lessons, and instructional strategies are developmentally appropriate and informed by educational and cognitive research.</p> <p>Disaggregate and analyze multiple sources of data to determine the needs of individual students and student subgroups.</p> <p>Engage all students in co-designing challenging, long-term projects that culminate in a public exhibition. (In addition to more traditional research and writing projects, these can include community-based learning, service learning, internships, and other alternative-learning options.)</p> <p>Conduct classroom observations on an ongoing basis and regularly analyze up-to-date information about the academic performance and socialization of individual students.</p> <p>Provide professional development so all teachers can differentiate instruction and personalize learning.</p> <p>Provide multiple pathways for students to meet learning standards, including extended learning opportunities (internships, community-based volunteerism, etc.), online courses, and dual enrollment experiences.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

<p>Student surveys and comments indicate a high degree of academic engagement, satisfaction with their teachers, and a strong desire to continue learning beyond high school.</p> <p>A significant percentage of the student body participates in internships, volunteerism, and other community-based learning opportunities, and participation is consistent across all student subgroups.</p> <p>Absences, expulsions, behavioral issues, and dropout rates are declining.</p> <p>Course failures during the ninth and tenth grades have declined dramatically.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	3	5
<p>Students are often engaged in time-consuming, lower-skill activities that add relatively little tangible academic value to the school day. Course-enrollment patterns reveal that low-achieving students from disadvantaged households tend to be enrolled in less-challenging courses that are taught by new or less-qualified teachers. Most classroom-based assessments rely on multiple-choice questions that measure only content knowledge and basic skills. Teachers infrequently engage students in long-term projects, complex problem solving, and other tasks that require the application of knowledge and higher-level reasoning skills. Remedial courses deliver less-rigorous instruction at a slower pace, and underperforming students are not always given the additional time they need to catch up to their peers. Special-education students are often separated from their peers, and the stigma associated with this label tends to reinforce negative self-images of academic or personal potential.</p>	<p>The lowest academic tracks have been eliminated, and most students are enrolled in college-preparatory courses. Prerequisites for higher-level courses—including honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual-enrollment courses—have been removed so that any motivated student can access challenging learning experiences regardless of past academic performance. School leaders and teachers have reviewed the academic program and eliminated outdated or nonessential courses. Some teachers are collaborating to develop interdisciplinary courses that explore concepts from multiple perspectives, but these opportunities are not accessible to all students. Student data are analyzed to identify underachieving students, and teachers are investigating and using intervention strategies focused on learning acceleration (not remediation), but these support strategies are not yet integrated into regular courses and coursework.</p>	<p>The administration and faculty have developed a common definition of academic rigor that is based on real-world learning needs, including research on the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in demanding postsecondary-degree programs and globally competitive modern careers. A concise set of academic objectives has been clearly articulated for every course and communicated to every student. Most units and lessons are thematic, cross-curricular, and explicitly address “21st century skills,” such as finding and organizing information to solve problems, planning and conducting long-term investigations, analyzing and synthesizing data, applying knowledge and skills in new situations, self-monitoring and self-directing, communicating and writing well, and working independently and in teams. Students are given time to investigate ideas in depth, and all students are engaged in long-term projects, exhibitions, and other performance-based demonstrations of learning. A variety of instructional strategies allow students to learn at their own pace and in ways that work most effectively for them. Teachers utilize interactive instructional techniques and regularly collaborate on intensive projects.</p>

SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

	<p>Ensure that course sequences are based on developmental learning progressions and are aligned across grades to eliminate content gaps and repetitions.</p> <p>Engage all students in intensive, long-term, in-depth lessons and projects, rather than content review or extended text-based activities.</p> <p>Treat all students as if they are college-bound: require every student to take a nationally recognized college-entrance exam (SAT, ACT), apply to at least one postsecondary-degree program, and complete the Common Application for Undergraduate Admission and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.</p> <p>Offer a college-planning program for parents that begins in the ninth grade, especially for parents from disadvantaged households, and provide a variety of workshops, materials, and assistance strategies to ensure these families have the information and practical guidance they need to encourage, support, and finance their children's postsecondary education.</p> <p>Engage community mentors and local experts to support students working on intensive, long-term projects.</p>	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION

	<p>Scores on standardized tests and local assessments are rising, particularly among traditionally underperforming student subgroups.</p> <p>The number of first-generation and low-income students enrolling in and completing postsecondary-degree programs has increased dramatically, and the percentage of graduates needing remedial coursework in college has decreased.</p> <p>A high percentage of students graduate with a strong set of demonstrated academic and real-world skills, as evidenced by college acceptances, scholarships, travel plans, grant awards, community-service awards, internship offers, or other recognitions and opportunities that are a direct extension of their high school work.</p>	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	Some efforts have been made to align coursework with career and college-ready learning standards, but in practice many teachers continue to use lessons that are unaligned or outdated. The school uses a standardized credit system based on seat time, letter grades, number averaging, and other traditional practices to measure academic progress and determine readiness for graduation. There is a great deal of variation from classroom to classroom in grading practices and standards. Students are often unaware of learning expectations for courses and lessons, and they rarely receive descriptive feedback on assignments. High-stakes external assessments often unilaterally drive instruction and lesson design.
3	School-wide curricula and instruction have been aligned with common learning standards, but this effort has not been systematic or systemic. District and school leaders have engaged in conversations about adopting a true standards-based system, and the principal and teacher-leaders have visited schools that are using effective standards-based practices. Teachers are employing multiple formative assessment strategies in the classroom, and academic support is being provided to ensure that struggling students have learned material before they move on to the next lesson. Some departments have developed common rubrics to enhance the consistency of grading and reporting, but this practice has not been embraced by all teachers or institutionalized school-wide. In some cases, learning expectations remain unclear and many students are still unaware of their own learning strengths and weaknesses or which learning standards teachers are addressing.
5	The school has publicly committed to becoming a true standards-based learning community, and graduation policy has been modified to require all students to demonstrate mastery of learning standards and high levels of college and career readiness before receiving a diploma. The faculty has prioritized learning standards in every content area so that the most essential content, skills, and habits of mind are covered in depth before teachers move on to additional material and standards. Multiple assessments are used to determine that students have mastered what they have been taught, and underperforming students are provided with additional instructional time, academic support, and alternative learning options to ensure that they are able to learn and demonstrate achievement in ways that work best for them. All teachers use common scoring guides that provide detailed descriptions of required learning proficiencies at each developmental stage and expected level of performance.

SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

<p>Use curriculum mapping to align coursework not only with state standards, but also with companion standards that address local needs, regional issues, college readiness and preparation for globally competitive 21st century careers. Make completed curriculum maps and other course materials accessible online.</p> <p>Develop a communication strategy and related materials that clearly describe the advantages and details of your standards-based system for prospective students, parents, colleges, and employers.</p> <p>Engage the entire faculty in collaboratively creating common rubrics and assessments that promote greater coherence and comparability across grade levels and course curricula.</p> <p>Require teachers to use the same reporting processes and online student-information system to centralize and streamline grading and reporting.</p> <p>Utilize thematic, interdisciplinary instruction built around long-term investigative projects that require students to apply knowledge and solve complex, real-world problems.</p> <p>Ensure that your school's standards-based reporting system can be readily translated to meet standard college-application requirements, including a GPA-conversion formula and materials that explain the standards-based reporting system to admissions personnel.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

<p>Student scores on standardized tests and assessments are rising, particularly among traditionally underperforming subgroups.</p> <p>There are no significant performance gaps among students from different socioeconomic, cultural, or special-needs backgrounds.</p> <p>College-remediation rates among recent graduates are low and college-persistence rates are high or rising.</p> <p>Nearly all students are performing at or above grade level by the end of tenth grade.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	<p>The school primarily uses a “one-size-fits-all” approach to assessment, and most assessments employ fixed-response, selected-response, and multiple-choice questions that primarily measure recall. The assessment literacy of teachers is limited, and many are unaware of research-based assessment strategies or the impact that varied assessment strategies can have on student learning. When students struggle to demonstrate what they have learned, assessment practices seldom change when students are retested. Teacher feedback often lacks clear guidance that will help students recognize learning needs and progress toward proficiency. Student learning is assessed infrequently, and assessment data are rarely used to modify instructional strategies.</p>
3	<p>More teachers are employing multiple assessment strategies in the classroom, but these practices are unevenly applied across the school and only occasionally result in personalized instructional modifications. Faculties are supported in increasing their understanding of assessment design and in matching assessments to specified learning goals. The school has started using more innovative assessment strategies—including exhibitions and portfolios—but many student projects display a lack of academic rigor, sophistication, or intellectual curiosity. The school has provided a few professional development opportunities to improve faculty understanding of effective assessment design and how assessment strategies can also be a learning tool for teachers and students. Assessment data is being reviewed and analyzed sporadically to inform instructional practices.</p>
5	<p>The teaching faculty has embraced assessment as a critical component of the learning process. The school has created a coherent system of varied, curriculum-embedded assessments that are aligned with standards and designed to capture a broad range of student learning. Teachers have received training in using assessments to identify and respond to student learning needs and are skilled in the use of diagnostic assessment. Formative, performance-based assessment strategies are used in every classroom throughout the school year to identify emerging student needs so that teachers can modify instruction and coordinate support before students fall behind. Performance assessments and demonstrations of learning are challenging, relevant, and model real-life situations and applications. Learning expectations are clearly communicated to all students at the beginning of courses and lessons, and students understand the assessment methods used by teachers. Teachers provide specific, detailed, and timely oral and written feedback to students on their learning strengths and weaknesses. Students are provided with differentiated assessment opportunities, where appropriate, so that they have ample opportunity to exhibit learning using multiple approaches. Equitable assessment practices ensure that all students have the time, resources, and support they need to demonstrate proficiency.</p>

SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

<p>Employ multiple assessment strategies and sources of evidence throughout the school year, including performance-based assessments, selected and constructed responses, questioning strategies, teacher observation, personal communication, self-assessments, student portfolios (including Web-based portfolios), and public exhibitions of student work. Based on these assessments, teachers provide meaningful, actionable feedback to students.</p> <p>Ensure that formative and summative performance-based assessments utilize open-ended questions and multi-step problem solving that require students to analyze problems, apply knowledge, think critically, and write extensively.</p> <p>Design assessment instruments and tasks so that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency, including English-language learners and students with special needs.</p> <p>Evaluate assessments to prioritize depth over breadth and determine if assessments are designed to show how students have mastered essential knowledge, skills, and habits of mind.</p> <p>Create opportunities for individual faculty members and professional learning groups to research proven assessment strategies, share best practices, and integrate them into practice.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

<p>The administrative team and faculty can cite critical student-performance data by content area, grade level, and student subgroup.</p> <p>There are no significant performance gaps among students from different socioeconomic, cultural, or special-needs backgrounds.</p> <p>Student exhibitions evidence high levels of creativity, innovation, intellectual sophistication, and applied skills.</p> <p>Parents—particularly those from first-generation, low-income, and other disadvantaged households—are informed about their child's academic progress, understand the standards and methods of assessing mastery of standards, and are engaged in helping their children succeed academically.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	Some teachers rely on outdated textbooks and learning materials that primarily espouse an American or Eurocentric point of view. The school only offers instruction in one or two European languages, and there are no alternative options for students interested in learning other world languages. History and social science courses focus primarily on the American experience and rarely explore the emerging global interconnectedness of societies and cultures. The school's vision and mission do not address international learning or multicultural awareness. Students and teachers have reported incidences of racial, ethnic, and religious slurs being used during or outside of school. English-language learners spend most of the day in separate classes, and students, parents, and community members from other countries are rarely invited to share their backgrounds and experiences with students.
3	School leaders and teachers recognize the importance of exposing students to global issues and perspectives, and the school's action plan outlines specific objectives for expanding international-learning opportunities for students. The school has added new world-language courses and is working to forge partnerships with regional high schools and local colleges to enhance world-language opportunities. The school offers programs designed to increase multicultural understanding among staff and students, but these opportunities are often elective, offered after normal school hours, or unconnected to curriculum and instruction. Teachers make efforts to recognize and honor the cultural diversity of their students, and lessons are often modified to include material relevant to the social and cultural backgrounds represented in the class. ELL students, immigrant families, well-traveled students, and leaders of local cultural institutions are occasionally invited to present their experiences in classes. Students increasingly participate in exchange programs, travel-abroad opportunities, volunteerism, internships, leadership programs, and other opportunities that expose them to different societies and cultures.
5	Enhancing student understanding of international issues and world cultures is not only an explicitly stated goal of the school, but school leaders and staff have made a concerted effort to incorporate international knowledge, cultural diversity, and global values into all programs and learning opportunities. Students have access to a variety of world-language learning options and experiences. International issues and perspectives are emphasized across the content areas and embedded in the curriculum and learning materials, particularly in world history, geography, anthropology, literature, art, culture, economics, politics, and current-event lessons. Humanities, history, and social studies courses go beyond "flags, fun, food, and festivals" to explore the global interconnectedness and interdependence of societies, cultures, and economies. Learning opportunities designed to foster a greater understanding of diverse cultures and belief systems are integrated into the school day and into co-curricular programs. Students, parents, and staff who are members of immigrant or minority groups are seen as valued community resources and are often called upon to share their expertise and experiences.

SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

<p>Recognize culturally important themes and events, particularly those that reflect the diversity and interests of the student body.</p> <p>Increase world-language course offerings, and coordinate with other schools, colleges, or cultural institutions in the region to share world-language educators and resources, or to provide online and distance-learning courses in languages for which a full-time hire may be impractical or infeasible.</p> <p>Emphasize challenging issues with global ramifications in science courses, such as climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem loss, fisheries depletion, deforestation, and food and water shortages.</p> <p>Make use of visiting lecturers, service-learning projects, sister-school programs, student and faculty exchange programs, and virtual exchange programs to expose students to different cultures, increase multicultural understanding among students, and internationalize curriculum and instruction.</p> <p>Ensure that courses and co-curricular programs address problems and challenges that result from racism, discrimination, ethnic conflict, and religious intolerance.</p>	<p>The number of students enrolling in and passing non-traditional Advanced Placement world-language courses (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Hebrew, and Arabic) has increased.</p> <p>The engagement, performance, and co-curricular participation of the school's English-language learners have increased significantly, as has participation in school activities among immigrant or minority families.</p> <p>There is no evidence of student violence, bullying, or behavioral issues stemming from racial, ethnic, cultural, or socioeconomic differences among students.</p> <p>Student coursework and assessments demonstrate a strong understanding of local, national, and global issues.</p>
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	Access to computers and online resources is limited due to scheduling issues, and inadequate supply of computers, outdated hardware and software, or a lack of skilled technical support. The school is not wireless and persistent technical issues occasionally shut down or disable the network. The faculty does not use common online applications to plan, organize, and manage courses, or to track student data related to lessons, performance, and demographics. The school does not provide professional development in the use of new digital learning technologies, and some teachers remain uncomfortable using digital learning applications in the classroom. The school does not have a long-range technology plan.
3	The school has a computer lab equipped with new computers, a variety of learning software, and a full-time learning-technology specialist, but an insufficient supply of computers, scheduling issues, and other minor problems limit teacher and student access to technology. Teachers are growing increasingly skilled in using digital tools and applications, but these practices are often limited to online researching, word processing, emailing, and other basic strategies. A few teachers in the school are highly skilled in using technology to increase student engagement and performance, but the school does not provide structured opportunities for advanced practitioners to model instruction or share best practices with their colleagues. Most students take at least one general course in digital and online literacy prior to graduation, but the school does not offer courses in practical technology skills—such as computer programming, digital photography, or graphic design—and computer skills are only occasionally integrated into regular courses. A secure, stable network provides reliable connectivity throughout the school facility.

5	Technology use across the school is transformative, changing the way that teachers teach and students learn. The school is a one-to-one learning environment, and each student has a laptop computer that can be used throughout the school day and after school hours. Student learning extends beyond the classroom to include real-world tasks or communication with experts outside of the school. Teachers take advantage of course-management software, a common student-information system, open-source applications, and other digital tools to facilitate the planning, organization, and communication within and across courses. The faculty consciously promotes and models digital citizenship and online responsibility, including respect for intellectual property, appropriate documentation of online sources, and ethical conduct and safety in online social interactions. Learning technologies and online resources are used on a daily basis in most courses, and every teacher has developed strategies to effectively integrate digital tools into their pedagogy. Technology is used to engage students in sophisticated knowledge construction, complex problem solving, peer collaboration, and the virtual exploration of global issues, and every student is required to demonstrate a high level of technological literacy prior to graduation. A strategic, long-range technology plan takes into account emerging needs and increases technology resources over time.
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SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

<p>Post all syllabi, assignments, and course materials online.</p> <p>Require students to maintain online portfolios of their work and use course-management software to stay informed about their courses and to communicate electronically with teachers and peers.</p> <p>Encourage teachers to create and publish online videos, podcasts, slideshows, blogs, and other digital resources that help students contextualize content, apply knowledge, and learn more effectively.</p> <p>Use videoconferencing, chatting, social-networking sites, and other online communication technologies to create virtual-exchange experiences that expose students to experts and peers across the country and around the world.</p> <p>Create and online “repository of best practices” to facilitate the sharing of professional literature, effective lessons, instructional materials, and teaching strategies across content areas and grade levels.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

<p>Student exhibitions display a sophisticated understanding of new learning technologies: e.g., students have created films, musical compositions, science experiments, and new software programs using digital tools.</p> <p>Students regularly participate in technology-based projects outside of the classroom, including high-tech internships, online entrepreneurship, and technical-support services for the school community and local organizations.</p> <p>Teachers have an in-depth understanding of student learning needs that would not have been possible without the aid of databases, online resources, and other digital applications that allow them to disaggregate data and communicate more effectively with students and parents.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	<p>Teaching practice is largely individualistic and uninformed by current research, collegial feedback, formative assessments, or student data. Classroom doors are generally closed and faculty members rarely observe one another teaching or have focused discussions about specific instructional strategies or student needs. The administrative team is largely focused on managerial responsibilities, and only a limited amount of time is devoted to investigating proven best practices, analyzing student-performance trends, and participating in professional learning. School policies do not explicitly support ongoing professional learning, and teacher schedules and workloads do not provide time for collaborative work and study. Some tensions among the faculty may go unresolved for long periods of time.</p>
3	<p>Teacher interactions indicate that there is a growing sense of trust, appreciation, and mutual respect for one another's contributions to the school community. Several teachers have been trained to facilitate professional sharing among teachers, and a significant percentage of the teaching faculty meets every month to discuss student work and instructional strategies. The administrative team has taken steps to stay informed about current research, analyze student data, distribute best-practice literature to the faculty, and support the ongoing professional learning of every teacher. Time for collaborative preparation and planning is provided to teachers during the school day, but this time is often unstructured, loosely facilitated, or unproductive in terms of improving classroom instruction across the school.</p>
5	<p>Faculty interactions are characterized by the kind of collegiality, trust, and respect that result from strong personal relationships, professionalism, and mutual appreciation. Teachers regularly observe one another's practice and provide constructive feedback that is based on a shared understanding of effective teaching, learning goals, and student needs. The faculty has developed a "shared language" for discussing instruction, assessment, and other critical elements of teaching and learning. All teachers are involved in consistent, group-based professional conversations that are well established, organized, skillfully facilitated, and goal-driven. Group agendas and conversations focus on addressing the specific tasks and strategies of student-centered, inquiry-based teaching and assessment. Faculty meetings are characterized by enthusiasm, intellectual curiosity, and a sense of collective responsibility for improving student learning and outcomes, particularly among traditionally underperforming student subgroups.</p>

SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

<p>Create a professional development program that balances graduate courses, external workshops, conferences, and school visits with job-embedded professional learning, including mentoring, instructional coaching, classroom observation, data analysis, and professional learning groups.</p> <p>Create a centralized online repository of research, best-practice literature, rubrics, scoring guides, curriculum maps, and effective lesson plans that can facilitate sharing and ongoing professional learning.</p> <p>Develop a "shared language" among the faculty for discussing instruction, assessment, and other essential elements of teaching and learning.</p> <p>Require all teachers to participate in a structured professional learning group that meets at least once a month for two hours or longer. Ensure that these sessions are well facilitated and follow a purposeful agenda focused on instructional improvement and student performance.</p> <p>Create time in the schedule for professional learning groups to meet regularly during the school day.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

<p>Interdisciplinary collaboration and team teaching are common, and teachers are knowledgeable about the learning expectations of their colleagues' content areas and the instructional practices they use.</p> <p>The school has lower dropout rates, reduced absenteeism, and fewer behavioral issues.</p> <p>Teachers report a more positive view of their students' abilities, more enthusiasm for teaching, more rewarding interactions with colleagues, and a stronger desire to continue learning and developing their own skills.</p> <p>Teachers are not only attending more conferences and other local or national learning opportunities, but they are also submitting proposals to lead presentations or facilitate workshops.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	<p>The school has a public vision and mission, but these statements have not been reviewed for many years and no longer reflect the needs of the current student body or the values and contributions of the current staff. The school's improvement plan does not represent a collective commitment or reflect the expressed values of the school community. State and federal funds for school improvement and professional development often go underutilized or unused. Many major decisions appear to contradict the school's mission statement, but faculty, students, and parents rarely discuss these inconsistencies. Teaching, assessment, and reporting practices are inconsistent across grade levels, departments, and classrooms.</p>
3 DEVELOPING	<p>The school has collaboratively developed a public vision and mission that reflects the contributions and values of diverse stakeholders in the school community, although some staff members and parents remain critical of the school's new direction. Despite broad-based participation in its development, the action plan tends to reflect the personal interests and desires of a few strong voices. School leaders have discussed the action plan with all staff members and some community leaders. These communication efforts have increased support among parents, the public, and the local media. The principal has presented the school's action plan to the school board and received general approval of its goals and strategies. Major decisions are increasingly aligned with the school's vision, mission, and action plan, and instructional practices are being modified to reflect the school's stated goals and values.</p>
5 PERFORMING	<p>In collaboration with staff, students, parents, community members, and local policy makers, the school has created a bold, student-centered, long-term vision for ongoing school improvement and professional growth. The mission and vision statements express a unified value system that is based on personalizing teaching and learning, promoting common high expectations, cultivating student aspirations and ambitions, and nurturing the holistic development and wellness of every student. The language of the vision and mission is clear, understandable, and powerful, and it exemplifies the shared principles and ideals of the school community. These statements have been formally endorsed by the school board, local policy makers, and business and community leaders. The vision and mission are used to guide all budgetary, staffing, and instructional decisions, and to shape annual action plans. The action plan and all relevant documents are publicly available online, and school and community stakeholders are familiar with its major goals and strategies.</p>

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<p>Invite a broad representation of school and community stakeholders to collectively develop a vision and mission that are ambitious but feasible, and based on proven, research-based strategies.</p> <p>Have school leaders and teachers, in collaboration with a school coach or colleagues from other schools, meet for several days during the summer to revise the school's action plan for the coming year based on an extensive review of quantitative and qualitative data from the previous year.</p> <p>Utilize online applications to track progress on action-plan objectives and to enhance transparency, accountability, and communication among staff members involved in implementing the action plan.</p> <p>Align supervision, evaluation, and hiring procedures with the school's vision, mission, and school-improvement plan.</p> <p>Establish trusting relationships with local editors, journalists, and producers, and proactively communicate with the media when either difficult issues or success stories arise.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<p>All students demonstrate consistently high achievement regardless of their gender, cultural background, socioeconomic status, or special needs.</p> <p>The community embraces the school's mission, values, and action plan, as evidenced in surveys of parents and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Local media outlets regularly run stories on the school's improvement work and profile student success stories.</p> <p>The school board, state representatives, and business and community leaders are informed about the school and publicly supportive of its goals.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

<div>1 INITIATING</div> <p>Some efforts have been made by school leaders to energize the staff, but general morale and motivation remain low. Adult interactions occasionally lapse into complaints, gossip, and other negative commentary about students, colleagues, or the school itself. Teachers unevenly enforce rules about student behavior, and persistent classroom-management issues too often become the focus of teacher attention and disrupt learning for students. Students have few opportunities to participate in school governance, and parents and community members infrequently or unevenly participate in school programs and events. Co-curricular and extracurricular activities do not engage students from a variety of backgrounds, and exclusionary cliques are common across the student body. Staff, students, and parents occasionally report incidences of bullying and derogatory language by students.</p>	<div>3 DEVELOPING</div> <p>The school has formal procedures that allow students, staff, and parents to voice concerns directly to the administrative and leadership teams. Innovation and risk-taking by teachers are accepted, although it is seldom encouraged or expected by school leaders. Improved collegial relationships are having a noticeable impact on staff motivation and morale. Administrators and teachers have developed a communication plan that is helping to keep parents and community members informed about the school and engaged in its activities. Student behavioral issues tend to be minor, and there is little evidence of bullying or harassment by students. Students from diverse backgrounds participate in co-curricular and extracurricular activities, but the same handful of students tend to assume leadership roles.</p>	<div>5 PERFORMING</div> <p>The school's commitment to equity is not just proclaimed in its mission statement, but is evident in every program, course, and interaction. Adults in the school do not make unconstructive critical statements about students, colleagues, or the school itself. School leaders and faculty encourage innovation, risk-taking, and professionalism in the classroom, and effective teaching is recognized and rewarded. The school community has collaboratively created and endorsed a system of shared beliefs, traditions, and practices that celebrate positive values and encourage a safe and inclusive school environment. The entire faculty feels individually and collectively responsible for the academic success, personal growth, and well-being of every student. Students feel a sense of pride in their school and ownership over their learning. Students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds are active in school governance and serve as leaders in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Administrators and faculty actively attempt to resolve any tensions or problems that may arise. Co-curricular programs and course-embedded lessons address diversity awareness and the importance of cultural sensitivity, and students are encouraged to explore and question their own beliefs about race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability. School leaders and staff do not tolerate hurtful language, prejudicial behavior, or the perpetuation of false stereotypes about other people and cultures. Student successes both in and outside of the classroom are publicly celebrated.</p>
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STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Ensure that all teachers intentionally model positive behaviors and actively promote positive student self-images of academic ability, future aspirations, and personal potential in the classroom.</p> <p>Hold open community forums in which school leaders candidly discuss school matters, and in which participants—students, parents, community members—are encouraged to speak up and raise concerns.</p> <p>Use agendas, protocols, norms, and other strategies to ensure that staff meetings are well organized, efficiently run, and focused on improving instructional quality, collegial relationships, and the student experience—not just administrative issues.</p> <p>Make special efforts to reach out to and involve historically disengaged parents in school activities.</p> <p>Encourage students to assume leadership roles and help promote a positive school culture.</p>	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Teachers, students, and parents are informed about school plans and activities, and student and parent participation in school decisions and activities is increasing.</p> <p>Extreme competitive behavior among students is not evident in the classroom, in communal spaces, or on the athletic field.</p> <p>More students are arriving early and staying late to meet with teachers and take advantage of learning opportunities.</p> <p>Discipline referrals have decreased and attendance rates are above 95%. Major student problems—such as depression, drug abuse, and suicide—are extremely rare.</p>	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	<p>The curriculum is a series of classroom-based courses culminating in a high school diploma, and students infrequently engage in learning experiences outside the classroom. Interdisciplinary collaboration is rare, and teachers infrequently use strategies to make content more relevant or to connect students with local issues, leaders, organizations, and opportunities. Student choice is primarily limited to course selection, and most courses do not integrate personalization strategies that address different learning styles and needs. The school has not taken steps to develop partnerships with local businesses or collegiate institutions, and it does not have established internship or dual enrollment programs. Technical education is entirely separate from the academic program. Students are given few opportunities to earn academic credit outside of classroom-based courses.</p>	3 DEVELOPING	<p>Multiple course options are available, although course content and sequences are largely predetermined and learning expectations are applied unevenly. Most courses are still taught in traditional classrooms, but teachers are gradually redefining their conceptions of what an effective learning environment can or should be. Online credit-recovery provides students who have failed one or more courses with alternative learning options that allow them to catch up to their peers and graduate on time. The school is responsive when students propose alternative pathways to meeting graduation requirements, but the faculty has not developed a system to encourage innovative, student-designed projects. Teachers in the academic program are beginning to collaborate with educators from the local technical program, and several integrated courses expose students to rigorous academic content while giving them the opportunity to develop applied skills. Partnerships with local business and collegiate institutions have led to the development of new internship and dual enrollment programs, but only a small number of students are taking advantage of these opportunities.</p>	5 PERFORMING	<p>The school and faculty have adopted a general pedagogical philosophy that teaching strategies, learning environments, and time can be variable, but learning standards will remain constant. The school provides a variety of learning pathways to every student—including classroom-embedded, co-curricular, and outside-of-school pathways—that accommodate different learning styles while applying the same universally high academic expectations. Students are encouraged to take an active role in planning their own education, and opportunities to propose and co-design additional projects or courses of study are provided. Access to and participation in alternative learning options is consistent across all student subgroups, and all pathways prepare students for success in college and globally competitive modern careers. The school's career and technical education program is integrated into and aligned with the school's academic program, and students are encouraged to select courses from both programs. Vibrant internship and dual enrollment programs enroll a significant percentage of the student body.</p>
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STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<p>Develop strategic partnerships that provide the kind of intellectually rigorous courses and programs that prepare students for college and technology-driven, 21st century workplaces (e.g., career and technical centers, community-based education programs, institutions of higher education, etc.).</p> <p>Forge partnerships with local or state colleges and universities to develop dual-enrollment programs for eleventh- and twelfth-grade students.</p> <p>Create curriculum-integrated, career-based programs—such as apprenticeships, internships, or job-shadowing—that enhance student understanding of career paths and strengthen school, community, and local business connections.</p> <p>Develop new graduation policies that provide more flexibility in meeting learning standards (e.g., a policy that requires students to complete a service-learning project before graduation).</p> <p>Monitor and track student engagement and dropout rates, and interview dropouts to determine the primary reasons why they left school.</p> <p>Develop alternative programs and adult-education pathways for dropouts to earn a high school diploma.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<p>Attendance, graduation, college-enrollment, and internship-participation rates have increased dramatically, and dropout rates are low and decreasing.</p> <p>A broad variety of students—including higher- and lower-performing students, male and female students, and students from higher- and lower-income households—take advantage of the school's career and technical programs.</p> <p>A significant number of students are graduating with transferable college credits and postsecondary certifications.</p> <p>Follow-up surveys indicate that dropouts have returned to school or completed an adult-education program.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	<p>Teachers have little information about the learning needs of incoming students, and the school has not developed a strategy for keeping parents informed about and involved in their children's education. Teachers rarely communicate student-learning needs across grade levels, and academic course progressions are not always articulated or aligned from one grade to the next. The school does not receive student data from its sending schools. Although individual teachers take a personal interest in their students' development, there is no systemic strategy for helping teachers identify student needs as they transition into high school or progress from grade to grade. The school has little information on student outcomes following graduation, such as data on college enrollment, remediation, and persistence rates.</p>
3 DEVELOPING	<p>Better communication with sending and receiving schools is beginning to occur, but these strategies tend to focus on administrative or logistical issues, not data exchange or student needs. The curriculum in most courses is aligned with collegiate expectations, although some students continue to be enrolled in courses that do not result in true college-ready preparation. The school has created an advisory structure that pairs every incoming student with at least one adult in the school, but the purpose of the program has not been clearly articulated and some advisories tend to be disorganized or unfocused. The school offers a variety of extended learning options, internships, and college-preparation programs to juniors and seniors, but these opportunities are largely being utilized by historically high-performing students from more advantaged households. The school tracks information on graduates, but rarely analyzes it to improve programs and support strategies for current students.</p>
5 PERFORMING	<p>School leaders and teachers have established strong connections between sending and receiving schools that focus on both programmatic alignment and student-needs issues. Teachers at different grade levels routinely discuss individual student learning needs—particularly for academically struggling students from disadvantaged backgrounds—and school structures ensure that every student is known well by at least one adult in the school. Courses and curricula have been articulated across grade levels, and with sending middle schools and postsecondary expectations, to mitigate content gaps and ensure a seamless continuum of learning. Teachers are knowledgeable about all content-area expectations and grade-level standards, particularly the specific standards for students transitioning into and out of their grade level. The school gathers and analyzes postsecondary data on their graduates and uses that information to improve postsecondary-planning programs and support systems.</p>

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Implement teaming (students paired with a consistent group of teachers) during the ninth and tenth grades to increase personalization and enhance teacher understanding of individual learning needs.</p> <p>Align all learning expectations, curriculum, and instruction with the school's primary sending middle schools so that entering ninth-grade students are equipped with the skills needed to succeed.</p> <p>Create a well-coordinated dual-enrollment program that allows students to take college courses for both high school and college credit, and that provides on-campus learning experiences and exposure to collegiate life.</p> <p>Beginning in the ninth grade, offer a comprehensive college- and career-planning program to all students and parents that is focused on practical guidance, including selecting a degree program, filling out applications, applying for financial aid, budgeting for college expenses, writing a resume, and interviewing well.</p> <p>Adopt a graduation policy that requires students to apply to at least one postsecondary-degree program and to complete the Common Application for Undergraduate Admissions and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.</p>	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Course failures, absences, behavioral issues, and dropout rates are low or decreasing among ninth- and tenth-grade students.</p> <p>College enrollment and persistence rates—particularly among first-generation, minority, and immigrant families—are rising significantly each year.</p> <p>A significant percentage of juniors and seniors are participating in summer learning programs, internships, peer tutoring, dual-enrollment courses, volunteerism, political campaigns, social-change activism, and other experiences that develop leadership skills, maturity, active citizenship, and preparation for postsecondary learning and adult life.</p> <p>The number of students taking standardized college-entrance exams, such as the SAT, ACT, and Accuplacer is increasing, particularly among student subgroups that have not historically aspired to a collegiate education.</p>	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	INITIATING	Interventions and support strategies are only offered occasionally outside of regular courses and school hours. When available, academic support is not integrated with regular courses and primarily consists of repeating material at a slower pace using the same general instructional strategies employed in regular classes. Special education is a separate academic track, and students enrolled in this program not only spend a great deal of time isolated from their peers, but they experience social stigma related to the label. Detailed data on absenteeism, behavioral incidences, and course failures are not consistently tracked or regularly analyzed to identify potential at-risk or underperforming students who may be in danger of failing or dropping out. School disciplinary policies lead to suspensions and other measures, compounding learning deficits for many students.
3	DEVELOPING	Intervention and support strategies are available to all students, but they are rarely evaluated for effectiveness or modified from year to year in response to fluctuations in student performance or needs. Academic support is viewed as an "add on," not as an essential component of effective teaching and learning that should be integrated into courses to accelerate learning for all students. Academic-support personnel receive little professional development, rarely coordinate with classroom teachers, and often employ the same instructional strategies that proved ineffective in regular courses. The school is taking steps to develop a comprehensive intervention system, but support strategies are not systemic, remain insufficiently challenging, and are provided too late in the school year to have a meaningful influence on performance.
5	PERFORMING	All teachers in the school take professional responsibility for student outcomes, including course failures and low aspirations, and the school's accountability and support systems ensure that all students receive the personalized interventions and instructional time they need to achieve high learning standards. Teachers across content areas regularly discuss the learning needs of their shared students, while co-developing personalized support strategies for struggling and at-risk students. Academic support is focused on acceleration, not traditional remediation, and strategies are regularly evaluated to determine if student outcomes are improving. All students—both high-performing and low-performing—are engaged in some form of individualized academic acceleration, which has reduced the negative self-images and stigma typically associated with support options. Incoming ninth-graders are pre-assessed to determine learning needs, and interventions are provided at the first indication that a student is falling behind.

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<p>Use "early warning" strategies such as formative assessment, student-led conferences, and advisories to help identify academically struggling and at-risk students before they fall too far behind or drop out.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive intervention system that utilizes a variety of integrated, mutually reinforcing support strategies, including after-school programs, summer school, co-teaching, peer tutoring, companion and bridge classes, and course-embedded supplemental instruction.</p> <p>Ensure that academic-support and extended-learning options are highly inclusive, offered to all students, integrated into all courses, and available to both low-performing and high-performing students, including independent studies and honors challenges.</p> <p>Provide all teachers with professional development focused on classroom-embedded support, personalized learning, and academic acceleration.</p> <p>Have skilled support staff—literacy coaches, special education teachers, guidance counselors, technology specialists—work closely with teachers to coordinate and enhance the quality of student interventions.</p> <p>Provide regularly scheduled planning time for the classroom teachers and interventionists supporting common students.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<p>Academic support is no longer stigmatized within the school community, but is viewed as a positive, essential component of the learning experience.</p> <p>Nearly all students are performing at or above grade level by the end of tenth grade.</p> <p>Graduation and college-going rates have increased significantly among traditionally underperforming subgroups.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	INITIATING	The instructional strategies employed by teachers are often hampered by time constraints and generally emphasize content coverage rather than depth of student learning. The school calendar, daily schedule, and other important information are not consistently updated or publicly available online for students and parents. School facilities are generally closed to the public on evenings, weekends, and during the summer, and few community organizations use the school for meetings, events, or programs. Outside of lockers, students are not given personal space, such as reading nooks or workstations. The majority of seniors attend school for only a few hours each day, and many of these students do not use this extra time to increase their readiness for college, work, or adult life.
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3	DEVELOPING	Teachers have discussed how learning spaces and time can be used more efficiently or effectively, and the majority of teachers are making efforts to incorporate proven practices that make better use of instructional time. The school, however, has not adopted formal policies to support these innovations. School facilities are being used more frequently for community activities and extended learning programs, but these opportunities are rarely integrated with the school's academic program and student participation is sporadic. Extended school hours, a year-round calendar, and other flexible scheduling approaches are starting to be employed.
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5	PERFORMING	All teachers ensure that lessons and pedagogy are being refined to make efficient and effective use of instructional time. Learning time is varied, enabling students to master skills and gain knowledge based on their unique learning needs rather than an inflexible common schedule. The school has redesigned its facilities and space to ensure that they are conducive to learning, and administrators have identified and prioritized needed improvements and upgrades. The school has made concerted efforts to become a learning center for the community, and school facilities are frequently utilized after normal school hours and on weekends throughout the year. The weekly school schedule includes time for professional sharing, collaborative lesson planning, and professional development for all teachers. School leaders have investigated developmentally appropriate class-scheduling strategies, longer blocks of time, extended school days, off-campus learning, and other flexible scheduling strategies that can empower teachers and students to work and learn more creatively. The school has taken steps to create flexible, multipurpose learning spaces that can be used in a variety of innovative and non-traditional ways by both students and teachers.
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STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<p>Conduct a "time audit" to identify trends and patterns in how instructional time is being used in every course.</p> <p>Restructure teacher schedules and workloads to increase the amount of time teachers devote to collaborative planning, preparing lessons, curriculum design, evaluating student work, professional learning groups, data analysis, instructional refinement, professional development, meeting with students and parents, and other responsibilities related to improving pedagogical effectiveness (in some high-performing countries, for example, teachers often spend less than 50% of their work time in the classroom).</p> <p>Publish a master schedule online so every member of the community can access information about all school and community events for the year.</p> <p>Involve students in planning the use of existing school facilities and any proposed expansions, including projects to develop environmentally sustainable practices and test the facility for environmental contamination.</p> <p>Prioritize all structural improvements, equipment purchases, and staffing decisions to ensure that student-learning needs are met first.</p>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<p>More students and teachers are arriving at school early or staying late to take advantage of school resources and learning opportunities.</p> <p>Parent involvement in school activities, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities has increased, particularly among low-income, first-generation, and immigrant families.</p> <p>Community members and business leaders regularly provide expertise, services, and personal time to the school.</p> <p>The school facility is increasingly used during evenings and weekends to host adult education programs, community celebrations, and public forums.</p>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	INITIATING	Annual student data are made available to school leaders and teachers, but it is often too late in the year to guide action plans, curriculum modifications, or professional development. The school uses a largely paper-based system for tracking and analyzing student data, and information is stored in different files and locations, making it difficult to access and organize. Frequent errors are uncovered in school and student data—even in state and federal reporting—and responsibilities for collecting and reporting data are not clearly defined. Teachers are unskilled in using data to identify student learning needs, and instruction is often predetermined and standardized even in courses that include a mix of student learning styles, performance histories, grade levels, or cultural backgrounds.
3	DEVELOPING	The school has developed a defined process for collecting, archiving, tracking, and analyzing student data that uses computers, databases, and other relevant digital applications for storing, retrieving, and analyzing data. Although the school has converted to a centralized data system, historical data remain disorganized and have not yet been entered into the new system. Data is regularly shared with the staff, but it is often confusing or misunderstood and only occasionally leads to changes in organizational design or instructional practice. School leaders have recruited skilled staff members and teachers to ensure the integrity, reliability, and utility of the school's data system. All teachers use data systems for grading and reporting, but many teachers are not yet using data diagnostically to improve instruction and personalize learning for students.
5	PERFORMING	Current and historical student data are an integral part of the school's decision-making process and academic program. The faculty is trained in how to use data to guide program improvements and help personalize instruction for all students. The school has a data-collection system in place that allows the faculty to look beyond test results and general percentages to identify institutional strengths and weaknesses, as well as patterns of performance across courses, content areas, grade levels, student subgroups, and individual students. The school has clearly defined performance objectives, and student data are tracked and reviewed to determine progress made toward achieving long-term goals. Professional learning groups regularly use disaggregated student data to guide their own professional growth, and teachers regularly make data-informed instructional modifications intended to address the identified needs of their students. Parents have online access to essential information and updates about their child's education. A thoughtful communication strategy utilizes online technologies to keep parents, local policy makers, and the public apprised of school-performance data and ongoing efforts to improve student outcomes.

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	<p>Make use of a common student-information system and other technological tools to track, disaggregate, and analyze student data (include data required for state and federal reporting, but also data that can help identify priority areas for instructional improvement, such as course failures, intervention outcomes, and postsecondary success data).</p> <p>Provide parents with online access to up-to-the-minute information on the academic status of their children, including information about current and upcoming assignments.</p> <p>Use the National Student Clearinghouse's StudentTracker for High Schools system to track the college-enrollment and -persistence rates of all graduates.</p> <p>Undertake a comprehensive data review at the end of each year to identify specific strengths and weaknesses that can shape the coming year's action plan.</p> <p>Conduct confidential surveys of students, parents, and teachers to collect data on school culture, teacher effectiveness, and other important issues.</p> <p>Utilize professional learning groups and other school-embedded professional development structures to ensure that teachers understand the importance of analyzing data, and have time to disaggregate student data, discuss their findings with colleagues, and determine research-based solutions to improve classroom practice.</p>	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
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STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	<p>Regular upgrades in data technology and ongoing refinement of the data-collection process are increasing efficiency and minimizing errors.</p> <p>Surveys of the faculty indicate that data is used to guide both programmatic and instructional decisions.</p> <p>Historically disengaged parents are more informed about their children's academic progress and are taking a more active role in their children's education.</p> <p>Discussions about student data at the faculty and community levels are aligned with the school mission and action plan, and are focused on addressing identified student needs.</p>	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
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STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	<p>Supervision and accountability procedures are largely top-down and teachers view efforts to evaluate their practice primarily in terms of job security, not professional improvement. Professional development opportunities are randomly selected, sporadically offered, and unconnected to a coherent plan for ongoing, school-wide improvement. Very little common-planning or preparation time is built into the school schedule for teachers, and faculty members rarely collaborate on curriculum design and interdisciplinary lessons. The school offers late-start and early release days, but many teachers use these opportunities to catch up on personal work or deal with short-term logistical issues. Funding streams are generally disconnected and available resources are not used to support a strategic, long-term school-improvement plan.</p>
3 DEVELOPING	<p>The school has an action plan that is reviewed and revised annually, but it is somewhat confusing, cumbersome, and overly ambitious. The faculty has developed academic-improvement goals, but these goals are general and not specific to content areas or student subgroups. Teachers are energized to improve instruction and learning opportunities for students, although new ideas and initiatives are often introduced haphazardly, resulting in some inefficiencies, confusion, and burdensome workloads. Teachers are beginning to see themselves as knowledge workers, and a culture of professional inquiry, self-reflection, and evidence-based teaching is emerging. Some teachers are participating in self-designed study groups, but the school has not yet offered the training and support necessary to institutionalize professional learning groups across the school. Teachers regularly participate in conferences and seminars, yet school leaders have not developed a coherent professional-development plan that is based on academic goals and identified student-learning needs.</p>
5 PERFORMING	<p>The school's action plan is ambitious, but achievable, and focused on a relatively limited number of targeted, high-priority goals each year. School-wide academic-improvement goals are based on identified programmatic or instructional weaknesses, and specific goals have been set for content areas and student subgroups. The action plan is driven by multiple measures—not just standardized assessment results—including student-level data and community demographics. School goals are clearly and regularly communicated to the school community. Progress toward achieving action-plan objectives is monitored throughout the school year, and transparency, collaboration, and consistent communication ensure accountability to the vision and objectives of the action plan. Disaggregated student data and assessment results are used to inform strategic planning and professional development, and the impact of professional learning is continually monitored using teacher surveys, assessment trends, and other data. Teachers view themselves not as employees or passive recipients of professional development, but as a community of leaders, knowledge producers, and student mentors. The school budget, grant funding, and other resources support the priorities and actions outlined in the school's improvement plan.</p>

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	Provide teachers with time for classroom observation, common planning, and other collaborative strategies intended to improving instructional quality. Ensure that professional development addresses the characteristics of effective instructional improvement identified by research: (1) create awareness of weaknesses in individual practice; (2) provide precise knowledge of best practice; and (3) motivate teachers to improve. Foster a pedagogical culture of research and inquiry in which teachers regularly review, discuss, and act upon the latest educational, instructional, developmental, and cognitive research. Examine collective bargaining agreements and look for ways to offer incentives (e.g. public recognition, sabbaticals, subsidized graduate study, professional advancement, etc.) to encourage teachers to improve classroom practice. Appoint expert mentor teachers trained in facilitation skills, coaching techniques, and instructional modeling to help new or struggling teachers. Contract a long-term school coach—i.e., a skilled facilitator and school-improvement strategist who develops trusting relationships and a strong understanding of the school and its needs—to help guide the school-improvement work.
	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	Ten percent of teacher work time (or more than a hundred hours a year) is devoted to professional development, including professional learning groups, instructional coaching, and other forms of school-embedded learning. At least ten percent of district or school budgets are devoted to providing professional development designed to improve instructional quality. Teacher surveys indicate that improvement strategies are regularly discussed with colleagues, mentor teachers, and school coaches, and a culture of cooperation, collegial, and professionalism is evident among the staff. Classroom observations are used to improve practice and not simply for annual performance evaluations.
	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1	INITIATING	Administrators select new teaching hires with little input from staff members, students, parents, and other stakeholders in the community. Teacher performance is not considered in the annual evaluation process, and disparities in student outcomes across courses are not investigated, discussed, or understood. New teachers receive little formal professional support, and the official guidance they receive is primarily focused on procedural issues, not instructional improvement. The school has a difficult time retaining experienced or motivated faculty, which has resulted in high turnover rates and persistent inconsistencies in programs and standards. Nearly all teacher time is spent in the classroom, and interdisciplinary collaboration is rare. The school does not have a formal professional-development program, and when professional-development opportunities are provided they are not aligned with the school's vision, mission, action plan, or identified staff needs.
3	DEVELOPING	Teachers contribute to the hiring process, including participation on interview committees, although the school tends to hire the most qualified candidates without sufficiently considering whether their background, personality, motivation level, and other factors are a good fit for the school community or its student needs. The school's induction process creates a welcoming environment for new hires by pairing new, less-experienced faculty with a veteran mentor teacher who provides regular guidance throughout the first year. After the initial induction period, structured opportunities for ongoing instructional coaching, professional learning, collaboration, and career growth taper off significantly.
5	PERFORMING	The school has a rigorous, multi-stage teacher-selection process that has been collaboratively developed with input from staff, students, and representative stakeholders within the school community. Every prospective teacher is evaluated against a clear, concise teacher profile that is aligned with the school mission and that outlines expectations for content knowledge, pedagogical skill, professional conduct, ongoing learning, and other essential attributes of highly effective teaching. Background, personality, motivation level, and other critical job-performance factors are considered during the hiring process to help ensure that new teachers are not only qualified, but a good fit for the school community and its needs. Beginning teachers are paired with an experienced mentor teacher who provides regular support, guidance, and in-class instructional modeling during the first two to three years of practice. Supervision and evaluation procedures are differentiated to accommodate the strengths and needs of teachers at different stages of their careers. Thoughtful professional-advancement and performance-recognition procedures motivate teachers to increase their professional expertise, pursue advanced degrees, assume leadership roles, and make valuable contributions to the school community.

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	<p>Recruit new teachers and administrators who graduated in the top 10%-25% of their class, and offer competitive entry-level salaries and other incentives to top candidates.</p> <p>Develop rigorous criteria and a multistage selection process for new hires that involves diverse representation from across the school community.</p> <p>Look for faculty candidates that embody the qualities of effective teachers as identified by international research: (1) strong literacy and numeracy skills, (2) strong communication and interpersonal skills, (3) a willingness to learn and grow as a professional, and (4) a strong desire and motivation to teach.</p> <p>Examine traditional collective bargaining agreements and salary scales and look for ways to restructure these processes to encourage teacher leadership, increase scholarly activities, and focus professional growth on improved student learning.</p> <p>Create at least a three-year probationary vetting period for new hires—during which their teaching skills are observed and teaching assignments are different than those of veteran teachers—before offering a permanent position.</p> <p>Provide new teachers with ongoing mentoring, practical-skill coaching, guided practice, and extra professional development during their first three to five years of teaching, and select mentor teachers and instructional specialists based on their proven record of effective teaching and coaching.</p>	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	<p>The faculty is composed of teachers from a broad range of backgrounds that bring varied professional skills, talents, and experiences to the classroom.</p> <p>Active engagement in professional learning has increased conference attendance, the pursuit of more advanced degrees, and other indicators of improved professional motivation among the faculty.</p> <p>Faculty turnover is low or decreasing.</p> <p>Faculty surveys reflect high or increasing levels of job satisfaction.</p>	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>School administrators are primarily focused on budgetary, building, and behavioral management, and relatively little of their time is devoted to instructional leadership. Major decisions are made by the superintendent or principal with little input from staff or students, and these decisions often seem random or unconsidered to many members of the school community. The principal has not clearly articulated his or her vision for the school or its academic program, and many administrative decisions are not aligned with the school's stated learning goals, action plan, or identified student needs. The principal is largely uninformed about the instructional practices being used throughout the school, and has not made professional development a school or budgetary priority.</p>	<p>The principal's vision for the school has energized some faculty members and stakeholders, but a few outspoken faculty, student, and parent voices remain opposed to the new direction. Despite good intentions, building-management and budgetary issues continue to absorb a significant amount of the principal's time, which has diminished his or her ability to take a stronger leadership role in improving instructional quality throughout the school. The principal and other administrators regularly praise and encourage the teaching staff, but they display little actual knowledge about or understanding of the teaching and learning taking place throughout the school on a daily basis. The principal recognizes that a good leader empowers others to assume leadership roles and work more effectively, and he or she has made a public commitment to promoting more shared-leadership opportunities in the school. During the summer, school leaders meet with faculty to review and refine the school's action plan, but administrators often fail to assess progress throughout the year and hold staff members accountable when responsibilities and tasks are not completed. The school has created a leadership team that includes diverse representation from across the school community, but the leadership team is not consulted when some major decisions related to the school mission, action plan, and academic program are being made.</p>	<p>The principal is a skilled instructional leader who understands teaching, regularly observes classrooms, and spends the majority of his or her time trying to understand the needs of the student body and develop a student-centered academic program that can meet those needs. The principal has articulated a bold, clear, and compelling vision for the school that is supported by a majority of the faculty, students, and parents. The principal and administrative team are committed to providing high-quality professional development to all teachers, and efforts are made to cultivate leadership skills, increase professional knowledge, and use feedback from teachers and students to improve practices and leadership strategies. Administrators make teaching assignments based on identified student needs and specific academic goals, not on tradition or personal preference. Performance data are used to make a compelling case for redesigning school structures and modifying practices in ways that will address student needs more effectively. A commitment to transparency and robust communications keeps all stakeholders apprised of efforts being made to realize the school's vision and mission. The principal recognizes that the school is a public, democratic institution, and that faculty, parents, and other stakeholders need to be involved in major governance decisions. The principal not only honors all voices and listens to concerns, but he or she acts responsively and proactively to address issues before they become a major problem.</p>

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Involve faculty and community stakeholders in hiring a principal with a strong classroom-teaching background and deep understanding of how to lead systemic school-improvement process.</p> <p>Devote at least 50% of the principal's time to school and instructional improvement (i.e., leading curriculum discussions, providing formative and summative feedback to teachers on instruction, participating alongside teachers in instructionally focused professional development, examining student data with teachers, etc.).</p> <p>Leverage formal leadership roles to foster a student-focused culture in which student needs—both individual and collective—take priority over other concerns.</p> <p>Require the principal to participate regularly in professional learning groups with faculty and with principals from other schools to discuss common issues and effective leadership strategies.</p> <p>Conduct annual whole-school reviews, using multiple measures and data sets, to determine what resources and support teachers need to improve student performance and outcomes.</p> <p>Develop communication processes that ensure the principal regularly and openly discusses the school's work with the staff, community, school board, superintendent, state legislators, and other community leaders.</p>	

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>The school community—especially the superintendent, school board, and faculty—have developed a rigorous selection process for new principals to ensure that the qualifications, skills, and personalities of candidates fit the school's vision, mission, and values.</p> <p>The principal and other school leaders regularly visit classrooms, meet with individual teachers and students, and attend school and community functions.</p> <p>The principal knows the names of students and staff, and is deeply knowledgeable about the school.</p> <p>Teachers and students regularly bring their concerns to the principal and/or leadership team.</p>	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>The school's governance structure and decision-making process have not been clearly articulated or publicly shared, and participation in major school decisions remains closed to most stakeholders. Most decisions are top-down and made with little input from the staff despite some attempts to broaden participation in governance. The school has not institutionalized processes that encourage and support aspiring teacher-leaders, and school-supported professional development does not explicitly address leadership-building skills. School priorities have not been clearly articulated or communicated, which has created confusion about staff responsibilities and led to a general reticence about taking risks or trying new approaches.</p>	<p>The school has developed a shared governance structure, but roles, operational specifics, and accountability procedures remain somewhat vague and undefined. Teachers and other staff members have a greater understanding of the rationale for and intention of decisions made by the principal, and efforts to improve communication and transparency are fostering greater trust and confidence in the administrative team. Leadership roles are routinely offered to the staff, but decision-making authority is limited and leadership responsibilities fall within narrowly defined parameters. Teachers do not feel entirely comfortable questioning administrative decisions, suggesting alternative approaches, or incorporating new strategies into their classroom practice. The principal operates under the belief that he or she needs to be involved in every school decision, which creates a "bottleneck" when it comes to implementing and advancing new initiatives.</p>	<p>The school has created a leadership committee made up of a representative selection of stakeholders (administrators, teachers, students, parents) from diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and special-needs backgrounds. A consistent leadership team—made up of skilled, knowledgeable, and motivated faculty—plays a major role in leading school-improvement efforts, shaping the school's strategic plan and academic goals, advocating for the concerns of staff and students, and improving communication and understanding between the administration (school board, superintendent, school administrators) and all stakeholders in the school community. All teachers are held to high expectations, but they are also given the decision-making autonomy they need to address and remain responsive to student needs. The school culture is collaborative, respectful, and collegial, and the staff members take pride in conducting themselves in a professional and respectful manner during interactions with students, parents, and the public. The faculty is involved in critical instructional decisions, including the selection of instructional resources, the design of professional development, and the creation of the school's action plan. Administrators and other school leaders listen to and honor all voices in the school community, especially voices that have traditionally been marginalized or underrepresented.</p>

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Create a system of communication, transparency, and accountability that ensures fidelity to the school's vision, mission, and action plan.</p> <p>Examine supervision-and-evaluation procedures and other school-wide decision-making processes for ways to encourage greater shared leadership.</p> <p>Create ad-hoc working groups, coordinated by a consistent school leadership team, to address specific issues or achieve specific goals.</p> <p>Create a process for administrators to regularly meet with individual staff members to discuss job satisfaction, career aspirations, and personal and professional growth.</p> <p>Develop a career pathway, which includes professional support and graduate courses, for motivated teachers to assume greater leadership responsibility over time and eventually attain administrative certification.</p> <p>Host public forums in which administrators and other school leaders inform the school community about major decisions and strategic plans, and ensure that meeting minutes and other information are distributed in a timely fashion and made available online.</p>	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Parent participation in school activities has increased, particularly among traditionally underrepresented families.</p> <p>Student participation in school governance, co-curricular activities, community volunteerism, activism, political campaigns, voting, and local, state, and national student-leadership opportunities has increased.</p> <p>Surveys of teachers, students, and parents indicate a high degree of satisfaction with school leadership and support for major school decisions.</p> <p>Parents, community members, and local business leaders and policy makers are informed about the school and its programs, and the local news media regularly profiles positive stories of student success and teacher leadership.</p>	

STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>The school culture is largely characterized by complacency and a “don’t rock the boat” mentality, and many important decisions are made in the effort to sidestep potential resistance or pushback from staff and parents. There are no formal structures or processes in place to examine student data at the classroom or team level, largely due to a desire to avoid singling out a specific teacher, group, or department. The principal and other school leaders routinely avoid confrontation or discussions about persistent issues, and poor student-performance results are not openly or honestly discussed with individual teachers. Poor scores on state assessments and other unflattering data may be hidden, excused, or minimized. Inappropriate and unprofessional behavior is often tolerated, which has eroded trust and collegiality among the staff. The school culture remains largely resistant to self-reflection, and the belief that “we’re doing good enough” persists despite evidence that too many students are failing to succeed or graduate.</p>	<p>The superintendent, principal, and leadership team have developed a strategic plan for confronting challenges that may arise in response to school-improvement efforts. Decisions are increasingly guided by identified student needs, research on school effectiveness, and sound principles—not by a fear of confrontation, resistance, or possible failure. The school community is no longer making excuses for poor student scores or other unfavorable data, but is taking steps to identify the root causes and undertake strategic actions to address the issues. Administrators, teachers, and other staff have collaboratively developed standards and norms for professional behavior and interactions, although unprofessional behavior by some individuals continues to go unacknowledged by administrators and colleagues. The school’s action plan is bold and ambitious, but the principal and leadership team have been unwilling to advocate for key elements with the superintendent and school board, even though the strategies are in the best interest of their students.</p>	<p>The principal, administrators, and teacher-leaders skillfully handle contentious issues and defend equitable ideals and practices—even in the face of actual or potential attacks—that promote positive learning outcomes for all students. Good intentions and well-laid plans are not undone by careless words or actions, but they are achieved through collaboration, professionalism, and goal-driven moral courage. Each faculty member assumes personal responsibility for addressing interpersonal issues before they turn into problems. School leaders are self-reflective, process concerns and conflicts openly, and move the collective dialogue beyond personal issues and interests. School faculty and staff advocate for the school’s improvement work within the community, and the principal and leadership team work closely with the superintendent and school board to advance critical policies that support a student-centered academic program. When difficult situations arise, the principal proactively communicates with staff, students, parents, and the larger community to minimize the spread of misinformation, including reaching out to school board and local media. In general, challenges are not avoided or postponed, but embraced by administrators, faculty, and staff.</p>

STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school’s performance in this dimension.

STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Openly review the school mission statement with staff, parents, and the community, and compare existing practices and organizational structures with the mission statement to ensure that programs are in alignment with its expressed principles.</p> <p>Adopt an "open door" policy so that any staff member, student, or parent with a significant concern about the school can meet with the principal and leadership team.</p> <p>Announce the school's commitment to equitable practices and outcomes for all students, and have the principal publicly outline a clear plan for achieving these goals.</p> <p>Establish a set of school-wide norms that encourage open conversation within and outside of the school regarding student performance results and other data.</p> <p>Adopt a set of shared expectations and norms—aligned with the school's vision and mission—for staff meetings, professional conduct, and adult-student relationships.</p> <p>Allow time in faculty meetings for staff members to raise concerns and question decisions in a constructive, respectful, and supportive manner.</p>	

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<p>Criticism and differing opinions are expressed constructively and respectfully among staff and within the school community generally.</p> <p>Student interactions reflect the positive behaviors, attitudes, and social skills modeled by teachers and other staff members.</p> <p>Administrators and teachers regularly ask students and colleagues for feedback on their leadership and pedagogy.</p> <p>School leaders regularly discuss the school's efforts with the district leadership and, when necessary, advocate for changes to district or state policies to create an environment that is more supportive of the school action plan.</p>	

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RESEARCH NOTE

Global Best Practices was researched and developed by the New England Secondary School Consortium, which includes the Great Schools Partnership and department of education staff from Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Preliminary drafts of this tool were reviewed and vetted by Michelle LaPointe of LaPointe Analysis and Evaluation for Decisionmakers, the National High School Center at the American Institutes for Research, and Joseph DiMartino at the Center for Secondary School Redesign. Michelle LaPointe is the author of the *Global Best Practices* literature review, which outlines the specific research literature consulted during the development of this tool. The Academy for Educational Development's High School Reform Strategy Toolkit (highschooltoolkit.com) was also consulted extensively, and many of its recommended strategies and practices have been incorporated.

The New England Secondary School Consortium and the Great Schools Partnership are solely responsible for the contents of this document and any inadvertent factual errors.

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ABOUT THE NEW ENGLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL CONSORTIUM

The New England Secondary School Consortium is a pioneering regional partnership committed to fostering forward-thinking innovations in the design and delivery of secondary education across the New England region. The five partner states of Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont believe that our bold vision, shared goals, and innovative strategies will empower us to close persistent achievement gaps, promote greater educational equity and opportunity for all students, and lead our educators into a new era of secondary schooling. The Consortium's goal is to ensure that every public high school student in our states receives an education that prepares them for their success in the colleges, careers, and communities of the 21st century.

From the schoolhouse to the statehouse, the Consortium is working to develop and support bold educational strategies that empower the next

generation of citizens, workers, and leaders to be prosperous and knowledgeable participants in our global community. The members of the Consortium recognize that the traditional ways of educating students are no longer aligned with today's civic and professional expectations, and that the time has come to rethink the traditional high school experience on a regional scale. By building equitable systems of public secondary education in each of the five partner states, the Consortium plans to make the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that were once the possession of a few the universal standard for all. To this end, the Consortium will support the development of high-performing, internationally competitive schools and educational experiences that will better mirror the lives and learning needs of today's students. No longer limited by building design, geography, or educational convention, we envision these high-performing schools becoming versatile community learning centers that

prioritize individual learning needs, blend secondary and postsecondary experiences, provide engaging educational opportunities both inside and outside the classroom, and offer a variety of student-designed pathways to graduation—all while emphasizing global understanding, multicultural awareness, technological literacy, real-world applications, and other challenging 21st century skills.

The Consortium is funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the largest philanthropy in New England focused exclusively on education, in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Great Schools Partnership, a nonprofit school-support organization based in Portland, Maine, is the Consortium's lead coordinator.

Appendix 4

*Maine's Educator Effectiveness Law; Public Law
2011, chapter 635 (LD 1858)*

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Ensure Effective Teaching and School Leadership

Mandate preamble. This measure requires one or more local units of government to expand or modify activities so as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues but does not provide funding for at least 90% of those expenditures. Pursuant to the Constitution of Maine, Article IX, Section 21, 2/3 of all of the members elected to each House have determined it necessary to enact this measure.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

PART A

Sec. A-1. 20-A MRSA §1055, sub-§10, as amended by PL 2011, c. 172, §1, is further amended to read:

10. Supervise school employees. The superintendent is responsible for ~~the evaluation of~~ implementing a performance evaluation and professional growth system for all teachers and principals pursuant to chapter 508 and an evaluation system for all other employees of the school administrative unit. The superintendent shall evaluate probationary teachers during, but not limited to, their 2nd year of employment. The method of evaluation must be determined by the school board, be in compliance with the requirements of chapter 508 and be implemented by the superintendent.

Sec. A-2. 20-A MRSA §13201, 5th ¶, as amended by PL 2011, c. 172, §2 and affected by §4, is further amended to read:

The right to terminate a contract, after due notice of 90 days, is reserved to the school board when changes in local conditions warrant the elimination of the teaching position for which the contract was made. The order of layoff and recall is a negotiable item in accordance with the procedures set forth in Title 26, chapter 9-A. In any negotiated agreement, the criteria negotiated by the school board and the bargaining agent to establish the order of layoff and recall must include the teacher's effectiveness rating pursuant to chapter 508 as a factor and may also include, but may not be limited to, seniority.

Sec. A-3. 20-A MRSA c. 508 is enacted to read:

CHAPTER 508

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

§ 13701. Definitions

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

1. Educator. "Educator" means a teacher or a principal.

2. Effectiveness rating. "Effectiveness rating" means the level of effectiveness of an educator derived through implementation of a performance evaluation and professional growth system.

3. Performance evaluation and professional growth system. "Performance evaluation and professional growth system" or "system" means a method developed in compliance with this chapter by which educators are evaluated, rated on the basis of effectiveness and provided opportunities for professional growth.

4. Professional improvement plan. "Professional improvement plan" means a written plan developed by a school or district administrator with input from an educator that outlines the steps to be taken over the coming year to improve the effectiveness of the educator. The plan must include but need not be limited to appropriate professional development opportunities.

5. Summative effectiveness rating. "Summative effectiveness rating" means the effectiveness rating of an educator that is assigned at the end of an evaluation period. Ratings or comments provided to the educator during the evaluation period for the purpose of providing feedback, prior to assignment of a final effectiveness rating, are not summative effectiveness ratings.

§ 13702. Local development and implementation of system

Each school administrative unit shall develop and implement a performance evaluation and professional growth system for educators. The system must meet the criteria set forth in this chapter and rules adopted pursuant to this chapter and must be approved by the department.

§ 13703. Use of effectiveness rating; grievance

A superintendent shall use effectiveness ratings of educators to inform strategic human capital decision making, including, but not limited to, decision making regarding recruitment, selection, induction, mentoring, professional development, compensation, assignment and dismissal.

Receipt of summative effectiveness ratings indicating that a teacher is ineffective for 2 consecutive years constitutes just cause for nonrenewal of a teacher's contract unless the ratings are the result of bad faith.

Any appeal of, or grievance relating to, an evaluation conducted pursuant to this chapter or an effectiveness rating resulting from implementation of a system is limited to matters relating to the implementation of the system or the existence of bad faith in an evaluation or the assignment of a rating. The professional judgment involved in an evaluation or implementation of the system is not subject to appeal or grievance.

§ 13704. Elements of system

A performance evaluation and professional growth system consists of the following elements:

1. Standards of professional practice. Standards of professional practice by which the performance of educators must be evaluated.

A. The department shall provide, by rule, a set of standards of professional practice or a set of criteria for determining acceptable locally determined standards for teachers and a set of standards

of professional practice or a set of criteria for determining acceptable locally determined standards for principals;

2. Multiple measures of effectiveness. Multiple measures of educator effectiveness, other than standards of professional practice, including but not limited to student learning and growth;

3. Rating scale. A rating scale consisting of 4 levels of effectiveness.

A. The rating must be based on standards of professional practice and measures of educator effectiveness. The proportionate weight of the standards and the measures is a local decision, but measurements of student learning and growth must be a significant factor in the determination of the rating of an educator.

B. The rating scale must set forth the professional growth opportunities and the employment consequences tied to each level.

C. At least 2 of the levels must represent effectiveness, and at least one level must represent ineffectiveness;

4. Professional development. A process for using information from the evaluation process to inform professional development;

5. Implementation procedures. Implementation procedures that include the following:

A. Evaluation of educators on a regular basis, performed by one or more trained evaluators. The frequency of evaluations may vary depending on the effectiveness level at which the educator is performing, but observations of professional practice, formative feedback and continuous improvement conversations must occur throughout the year for all educators;

B. Ongoing training on implementation of the system to ensure that all educators and evaluators understand the system and have the knowledge and skills needed to participate in a meaningful way;

C. A peer review component to the evaluation and professional growth system and opportunities for educators to share, learn and continually improve their practice; and

D. Formation of a steering committee composed of teachers, administrators and other school administrative unit staff that regularly reviews and refines the performance evaluation and professional growth system to ensure that it is aligned with school administrative unit goals and priorities; and

6. Professional improvement plan. The opportunity for a educator who receives a summative effectiveness rating indicating ineffectiveness in any given year to implement a professional improvement plan.

§ 13705. Phase-in of requirements

The requirements of this chapter apply to all school administrative units beginning in the 2015-2016 school year. In the 2013-2014 school year, each unit shall develop a system that meets the

standards of this chapter, in collaboration with teachers, principals, administrators, school board members, parents and other members of the public. In the 2014-2015 school year, each unit shall operate as a pilot project the system developed in the prior year by applying it in one or more of the schools in the unit or by applying it without using results in any official manner or shall employ other means to provide information to enable the unit to adjust the system prior to the first year of full implementation. Nothing in this section prohibits a unit from fully implementing the system earlier than the 2015-2016 school year.

§ 13706. Rules

The department shall adopt rules to implement this chapter, including but not limited to a rule relating to the method of identifying the educator or educators whose effectiveness ratings are affected by the measurement of learning or growth of a particular student. The department shall also adopt rules pertaining to the approval of performance evaluation and professional growth systems pursuant to section 13702. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are major substantive rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

Sec. A-4. 20-A MRSA §15681, sub-§1, ¶D is enacted to read:

D. To receive targeted educator evaluation funds, a school administrative unit must have or be in the process of developing a performance evaluation and professional growth system pursuant to chapter 508 and the rules adopted pursuant to that chapter.

Sec. A-5. 20-A MRSA §15681, sub-§6 is enacted to read:

6. Targeted funds for educator evaluation. For educator evaluation funds beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the commissioner shall calculate the amount available to assist school administrative units in developing and implementing performance evaluation and professional growth systems pursuant to chapter 508.

Sec. A-6. Council created. The Maine Educator Effectiveness Council, referred to in this section as "the council," is created to make recommendations regarding implementation of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 508 to the Commissioner of Education and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.

1. Members. The council consists of the Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee and the following members, appointed by the Commissioner of Education:

- A. A member of the State Board of Education, nominated by the state board;
- B. Four public school teachers, at least one of whom is a special education teacher, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine Education Association;
- C. A member representing educators in tribal schools in this State, appointed from a list of names provided by the respective tribal schools that are affiliated with Maine Indian Education;
- D. Two public school administrators, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine Principals' Association and the Maine School Superintendents Association;
- E. Two members of school boards, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine School Boards Association;

- F. One faculty member representing approved educator preparation programs;
- G. Two members of the business community; and
- H. Two members of the general public with interest and experience in the education field.

The council must be cochaired by the Commissioner of Education and one other council member elected by the full membership of the council. The council may establish subcommittees and may appoint persons who are not members of the council to serve on the subcommittees as needed to conduct the council's work.

2. Duties. The council shall recommend standards for implementing a system of evaluation and support of teachers and principals consistent with the requirements of Title 20-A, chapter 508. The council shall:

- A. Recommend a set of professional practice standards applicable to teachers and a set of professional practice standards applicable to principals;
- B. Recommend a 4-level rating scale with clear and distinct definitions applicable to teachers and principals;
- C. Recommend potential measures of student learning and growth;
- D. Recommend the major components of an evaluation process, including but not limited to:
 - (1) Ongoing training to ensure that evaluators and teachers and principals have a full understanding of the evaluation system and its implementation;
 - (2) Methods of gathering evidence for the evaluation, which may include observation by supervisors and peers, self-reflection, student or parent surveys, analysis of artifacts and evidence portfolios;
 - (3) Methods of providing feedback to teachers and principals for formative evaluation purposes;
 - (4) Weighting of measures used in evaluating teachers and principals, which must provide that student learning and growth indicators inform a significant portion of the effectiveness rating;
 - (5) Methods for aligning district, school and classroom goals using the evaluation system; and
 - (6) Methods for linking summative effectiveness ratings to human capital decisions; and
- E. Recommend a system of supports and professional development linked to effectiveness ratings for teachers and principals, including a process for developing and implementing a professional improvement plan.

3. Report. The Commissioner of Education shall submit a report regarding the work of the council to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than November 1, 2012. The report must include the council's recommendations regarding implementation of the requirements set forth in Title 20-A, chapter 508 and recommendations regarding the continuing work of the council.

4. Staff assistance. The Department of Education shall provide staff assistance to the council. The department may seek and employ grant funds to provide additional assistance.

5. Council continuation. The council is authorized to continue meeting, if it so desires, 90 days

after adjournment of the First Regular Session of 126th Legislature.

PART B

Sec. B-1. 20-A MRSA §13008 is enacted to read:

§ 13008. Educator preparation program data

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Educator preparation program" means a public or private baccalaureate-level or postbaccalaureate-level program approved by the state board to recommend graduates for certification pursuant to chapter 502 as prekindergarten to grade 12 teachers, educational specialists or school leaders.

B. "Program completer" means a person who, by successfully completing all of an educator preparation program's requirements, has qualified for a recommendation for certification as a prekindergarten to grade 12 teacher, an educational specialist or a school leader.

2. Data collection. The department shall collect data relating to educator preparation programs, including but not limited to the following information with respect to each educator preparation program:

A. The number of program completers;

B. The number of program completers who pass certification tests and the number of those who attain provisional licensure in the State;

C. The number of program completers who proceed from provisional licensure to professional licensure; and

D. The number of program completers who are teaching in schools in this State 3 and 5 years after they complete that educator preparation program.

3. Report. The department shall annually report the data collected under this section to the Governor, the state board and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters.

Sec. B-2. 20-A MRSA §13011, sub-§6, as enacted by PL 1989, c. 889, §8, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

6. Alternative pathways to certification. The state board shall develop and adopt rules providing a method for a person who has not completed an approved educator preparation program as defined under section 13008 to obtain provisional educator certification through an alternative pathway that:

A. Is designed for candidates who can demonstrate subject matter competency that is directly

related to the certificate endorsement being sought and obtained through prior academic achievement or work experience;

B. May feature an accelerated program of preparation;

C. Uses mentorship programs that partner teacher candidates with mentor teachers; and

D. Includes accountability provisions to ensure that teacher candidates demonstrate the knowledge and skills established pursuant to section 13012, subsection 2-B prior to issuance of a provisional teacher certificate.

Sec. B-3. 20-A MRSA §13011, sub-§10, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 445, §2, is amended to read:

10. Conditional certificate; transitional endorsement; exception. A conditional certificate is a certificate for teachers and educational specialists who have not met all of the requirements for a provisional or professional certificate. A school administrative unit may employ a conditionally certified teacher or educational specialist who is in the process of becoming professionally certified notwithstanding the availability of provisionally or professionally certified teachers or educational specialists. Any amendment to the rules adopted pursuant to this chapter that revises the qualifications for a conditional certificate or transitional endorsement does not apply to a person who was issued a conditional certificate or transitional endorsement prior to or during the school year preceding the adoption of revisions to the rules as long as the holder of the conditional certificate or transitional endorsement annually completes the required course work and testing as determined by the department for the school year preceding the adoption of revised rules.

Sec. B-4. 20-A MRSA §13012, sub-§2-A, as enacted by PL 2001, c. 534, §2 and amended by PL 2005, c. 397, Pt. D, §3, is further amended to read:

2-A. Qualifications. State board rules governing the qualifications for a provisional teacher certificate must require that a certificate may only be issued to an applicant who meets the requirements of subsection 2-B, has successfully completed a student teaching experience of at least 15 weeks and:

A. For elementary school, has met academic and preprofessional requirements established by the state board for teaching at the elementary school level and has graduated from an accredited, degree-granting educational institution upon completion of:

(1) A bachelor's degree from a 4-year accredited college or university;

(2) A 4-year program in liberal arts and sciences; or

(3) An approved 4-year teacher preparation program and has majored in the subject area to be taught or an interdisciplinary program in liberal arts;

B. For secondary school, has met academic and preprofessional requirements established by the state board for teaching at the secondary school level and has graduated from an accredited, degree-granting educational institution upon completion of:

- (1) A bachelor's degree from a 4-year accredited college or university;
- (2) A 4-year program in liberal arts and sciences; or
- (3) An approved 4-year teacher preparation program and has majored in the subject area to be taught;

C. Is otherwise qualified by having met separate educational criteria for specialized teaching areas, including, but not limited to, special education, home economics, agriculture, career and technical education, art, music, business education, physical education and industrial arts, as established by the state board for teaching in these specialized areas; or

D. Has completed 6 credit hours of approved study within 5 years prior to application, has met entry-level standards and has held either a professional teacher certificate that expired more than 5 years prior to the application date or a provisional teacher certificate issued prior to July 1, 1988 that expired more than 5 years prior to the application date.

Sec. B-5. Certification rules. The State Board of Education shall amend its rules relating to certification of educators under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 13012 to require that any person seeking an endorsement to teach kindergarten to grade 8 students must demonstrate proficiency in math and reading instruction, including evidence-based reading instruction. For the purposes of this section, "evidence-based reading instruction" means instructional practices that have been proven by systematic, objective, valid and peer-reviewed research to lead to predictable gains in reading achievement. The requirement must apply to all teachers and educational specialists, including teachers in special education and teachers of English language learners.

Sec. B-6. Alternative certification working group. The State Board of Education shall establish a working group to develop one or more alternative certification pathways that meet the standards set forth in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 13011, subsection 6. Members of the State Board of Education shall participate in the working group, and the State Board of Education shall invite the participation of representatives of the Maine Education Association, the Maine School Superintendents Association, the Maine Principals' Association, the Maine School Boards Association, Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities and Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education, representatives of approved educator preparation programs, parents and the business community and other interested parties. The working group shall submit a report describing one or more alternative certification pathways to the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education. The State Board of Education shall submit the report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than November 1, 2012. The report must include pathway descriptions, the working group's recommendations and any draft legislation or rules needed to implement the recommendations.

Effective 90 days following adjournment of the 125th Legislature, Second Regular Session, unless otherwise indicated.

Appendix 5

Lewiston Public Schools Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Program (part of the Maine Schools for Excellence project)



LEWISTON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Program

Proposed for School Year 2012-13

“The primary purpose of an effective teacher evaluation system is to foster improvement in teaching practice and student growth. The best system includes rubrics that clearly communicate exemplary teaching practice. Such a system supports and promotes teacher reflection, professional development and collaboration. It is equitable and able to differentiate among various teaching positions.”

- Lewiston Steering Committee
February, 2011

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Introduction

In February 2011, the Lewiston School Committee accepted a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Grant centered on improving educator effectiveness and student learning. The grant is overseen by our 25-member District Steering Committee (DSC) made up of teachers, administrators and a community member. The DSC has worked on improvements in many areas including the development of a new teacher evaluation system.

The present teacher evaluation tool used in Lewiston Public Schools was developed prior to 1995. The current model was not meeting the needs for desired professional development on instructional practice and student outcomes. In addition, our present system falls far short of meeting either Federal and State mandates or public expectations that teacher evaluation include consideration of student achievement data.

The Steering Committee has developed a new model, the Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth (TEPG) program that address the shortfalls above. Specifically, the evaluation tool will consider student growth and teacher performance related to the Five Core Propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The National Board was founded by teachers in 1985 in response to the educational shortcomings identified in the now well-known report, A Nation at Risk, published by the U.S. Department of Education in 1984. The Board wrote the Core Propositions and 17 related standards and developed a national teacher certification process commonly referred to as National Board teacher certification.

Lewiston teachers are learning about the Core Propositions (see Figure 1, next page) and related standards through our 2011-2012 professional development focus called the Take One! process. This professional development will continue in 2012-13 through the introduction and training in the new TEPG program. The program development and refinement will take time, and will continue throughout the 5-year grant period. Teacher input and feedback will be crucial – and asked for – in order to fine-tune the tool and the overall system and assure that it is meeting its intended purposes.

The goals of the TEPG program and the process used in its design align directly with the recommendations of national education groups such as the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. The Center recommends that “To further the development of direct links between teacher evaluation and instructional improvement, states and districts need to nurture an educational climate in which evaluation is not seen as punitive and teachers are highly invested in the process. The core of evaluation reform efforts should be human capacity building at all levels so that states, districts, and schools can identify and learn from top-performing teachers, support discouraged and less successful teachers, and continue to develop all teachers toward their full potential.”

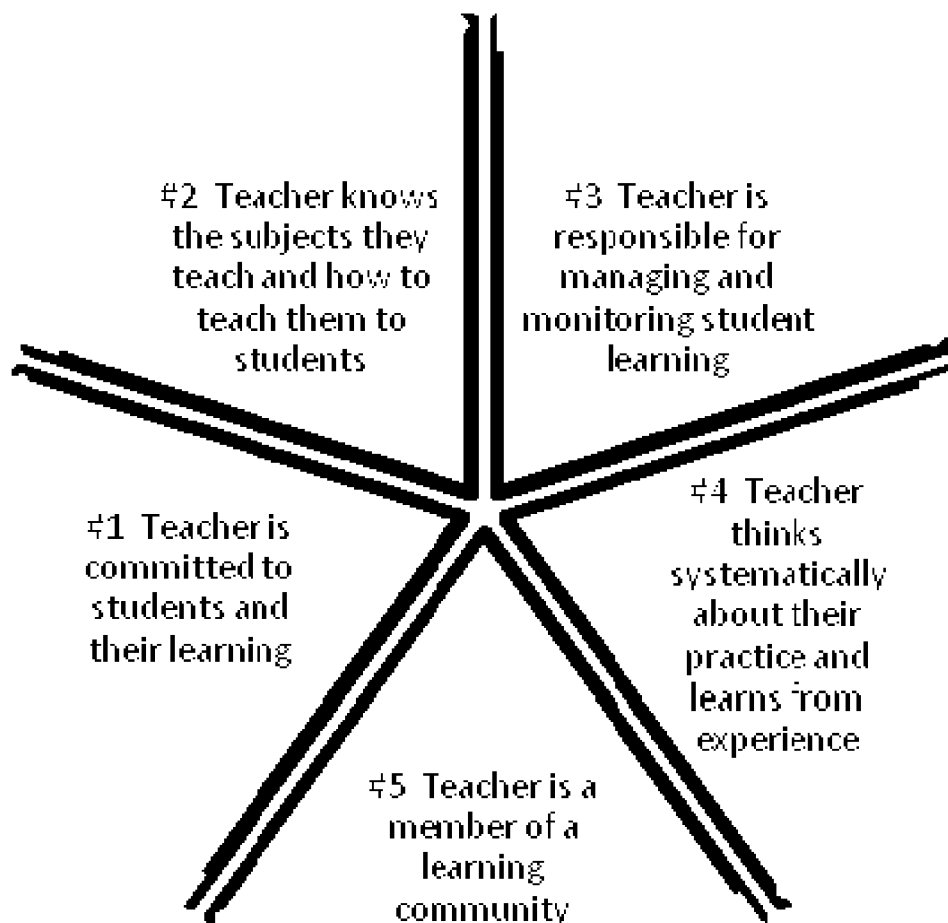


Figure 1
NBPTS Core Propositions

Program Purpose

The overarching purpose of the TEPG program is to **improve instruction and student learning growth** by:

- Serving as a measurement of performance of individual teachers;
- Clarifying expectations and serving as a guide for teachers as they reflect upon and improve their effectiveness;
- Facilitating collaboration by providing a common language to discuss performance;
- Serving as a basis for identifying areas where professional development can improve instructional effectiveness;
- Focusing the goals and objectives of schools and districts as they support, monitor, and evaluate their teachers; and
- Serving as a tool in developing coaching and mentoring programs for teachers.

The program includes the following key features:

- Allows administrators to provide on-going, concrete feedback to teachers about their performance against a clear, detailed NBPTS-anchored performance rubric through classroom observations and review of student data and teacher performance;
- Utilizes a performance rubric that includes multiple rating options and level-cutting language that enables administrators to clearly identify and describe differences in instructional performance;
- Incorporates student growth as measured by objective assessments as a significant factor in evaluations, with a plan to be able to collect such data for the vast majority of classroom teachers within the next 3 years;
- Provides support for teachers who fall below performance standards;
- Includes a pilot peer review process that will be continually refined over the course of the grant to ensure optimal benefit to teachers as a formative assessment tool;
- Incorporates a process of on-going self-reflection, goal setting and evaluation to drive continuous performance improvement and professional growth; and
- Provides regular training to teachers and administrators in the TEPG process, opportunities and proper use of the observation tool.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

The foundation for the TEPG program are the following National Board's Five Core Propositions and 17 standards that specify the knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments required for accomplished teaching. (Our TEPG program also includes performance on two goals, one for student growth and one for professional growth, both discussed in the next section.)

➤ **Core Proposition #1: Teachers are committed to students and their learning.**

1.1 Teacher recognizes individual differences in their students and adjusts their practice accordingly.

1.2 Teacher has an understanding of how students develop and learn and know the backgrounds, abilities, and interests of students.

1.3 Teacher treats students equitably and fosters a stimulating and collaborative environment where all students are encouraged to participate.

1.4 Teacher's mission extends beyond the cognitive capacity of their students.

➤ **Core Proposition #2: Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.**

2.1 Teacher appreciates how knowledge in their subject is created, organized, and linked to other disciplines.

2.2 Teacher commands specialized knowledge of how to convey a subject to students.

2.3 Teacher generates multiple paths to knowledge.

➤ **Core Proposition #3: Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.**

3.1 Teacher calls on multiple methods to meet their goals.

3.2 Teacher orchestrates learning in group settings.

3.3 Teacher places a premium on student engagement.

3.4 Teacher regularly assesses student progress.

➤ **Core Proposition #4: Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.**

4.1 Teacher is continually making difficult choices that test their judgment.

4.2 Teacher seeks the advice of others and draws upon education research and scholarship to improve their practice.

➤ **Core Proposition #5: Teachers are members of learning communities.**

5.1 Teacher contributes to school effectiveness by collaborating with other professionals.

5.2 Teacher works collaboratively with parents.

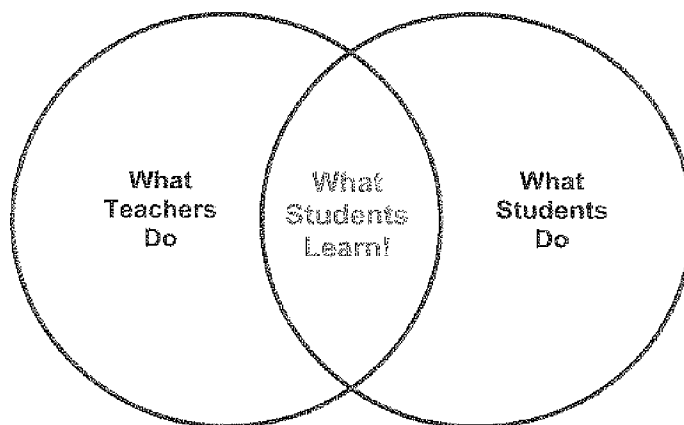
5.3 Teacher takes advantage of community resources.

5.4 Teacher considers their professional ethics in all interactions.

The 2011-2012 professional development focus on the National Board's Take One! is at the heart of accomplished teaching, e.g., evidence-based teaching. Quoting the National Board, evidence-based teaching is "a way of structuring classroom planning and instruction that allows teachers to continuously collect, interpret and use evidence of student learning to make appropriate decisions that guide future instruction.

Evidence-based teaching is the process of continually using data (e.g., observations, student work, assessments, responses to questions) to ensure teaching is tightly aligned to individual student needs and to ensure high levels of learning..." As illustrated in Figure 2 below, for student learning to occur, there must be a strong connection between what teachers know and are able to do to facilitate student learning, and what students do that optimize their learning.

Venn Diagram: Evidence-based Teaching



Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth

Key Components

Before participating in the evaluation process, all teachers and administrators will be trained on the TEPG program. TEPG training for teachers will include work on the National Board's Core Propositions and standards, the evaluation process, support for teachers on growth plans, student growth measures to be used, goal setting, deadlines and accountabilities. Administrators will be trained on skill development in the effective use of the evaluation instrument to ensure inter-rater reliability. Our goal is to involve all teachers in all components during the 2012-13 school year while realizing that additional administrator support may be necessary for this to be accomplished.

The seven key components and annual timeline of the TEPG program are illustrated in Figure 3 and described beginning on the next page:

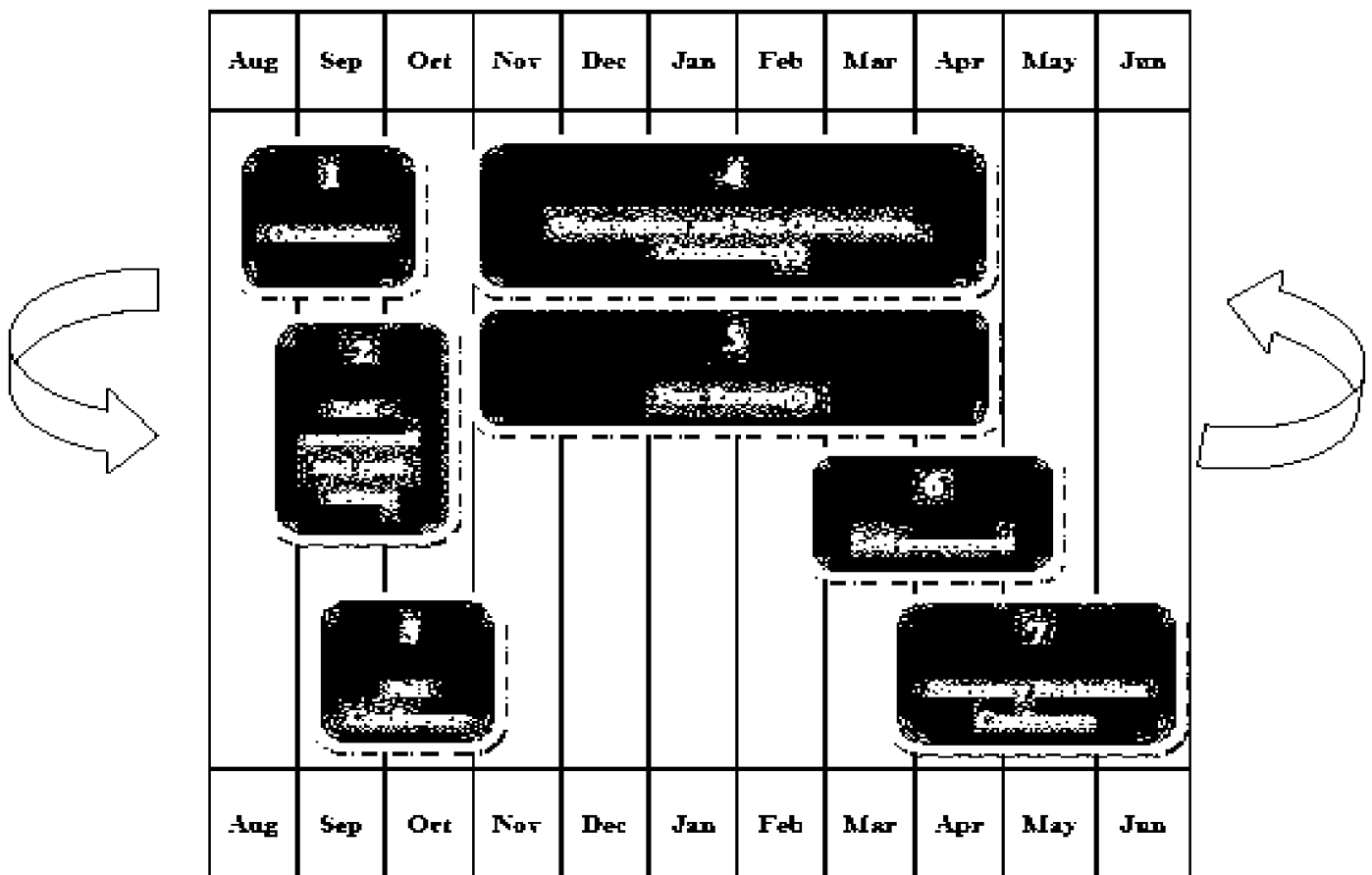


Figure 2
Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Program
Components and Timeline

Component 1: Orientation

At the beginning of each school year, the administrator will provide the teacher with this TEPG handbook, which will include the:

- TEPG Rubric including student growth measures to be used, if applicable;
- TEPG goal setting form and completed example;
- Lesson Description template for use with planned observation;
- Evidence Portfolio template; and
- A schedule for completing all components of the performance evaluation process.

Copies may be provided by electronic means.

The administrator will briefly review the overall intent of the TEPG program as well as the National Board Standards. For new teachers, a more in-depth presentation of the TEPG program will be part of the induction and mentoring program.

Component 2: Teacher Self-Assessment and Goal Setting

Using the TEPG rubric the teacher shall review each of the 17 performance standards, student growth measurements, if applicable, and reflect on prior year strengths and improvement opportunity. Using the TEPG goal setting form, the teacher shall identify at least one (1) student learning goal *and* one (1) professional growth goal, both of which should align with school priorities. Each section of the goal setting form must be completed.

Component 3: Fall Conference

The teacher meets with the administrator to review and confirm student learning and professional growth goals established in Component 2. This meeting will include discussion of the self-assessment and schedule for planned and unplanned observations during the school year. Once goals have been finalized, teachers shall begin gathering evidence of effective instructional practice and goal achievement to be included in an evidence portfolio to be presented to the administrator at the Summary Evaluation Conference (Component 7).

Prior to planned observations, the teacher shall provide the administrator with a written description of the lesson(s) that includes the student learning goals, activities and any assessment process or product that will be used to indicate if students are moving toward the goals.

Component 4: Administrator Observations and Post Observation Conference(s)

A *planned* observation shall last at least 30 minutes. The administrator shall conduct at least 3 formal observations of all probationary teachers each year. Continuing Contract Teachers (CCT) will receive at least one planned observation during their scheduled evaluation year (see p. x). During all planned observations, the administrator shall note the teacher's performance in relationship to the applicable National Board Standards on the TEPG.

The administrator shall conduct a post-observation conference no later than 10 school days after each formal planned observation. During the post-observation conference, the administrator and teacher shall discuss and document on the TEPG evaluation form, goal status, performance strengths, and improvement opportunities observed during the lesson.

An *unplanned* observation can be a 5-10 minute short visit or walkthrough, or last up to an entire class period. Multiple unplanned observations will be conducted on ALL teachers. An administrator may use information gathered from unplanned observations in completing the TEPG evaluation form and is also expected to follow-up with the teacher on any significant issue identified or appropriate constructive feedback.

Component 5: Peer Review

Each teacher will receive a peer review annually and will be provided the opportunity to suggest three other teachers to complete the observation. The observation and pre and post conferences are expected to focus on a minimum of three standards selected by the administrator and three standards selected by the teacher being observed. Each standard should be taken from Core Propositions #1, #2 or #3 as they are directly observable. The form included on page 27 of this handbook is to be used for this process and is to be the only document to be included in a teacher's personnel file. All discussion between the teacher being observed and the observer are to be considered confidential and for use by the teacher to enhance teaching practices.

Component 6: Teacher Self-Assessment

At least two weeks prior to the scheduled Summary Evaluation Conference (Component 7) the teacher shall present a completed self-assessment (using the TEPG Rubric) and evidence portfolio to the administrator.

Component 7: Summary Evaluation Conference

Prior to the scheduled conference, the administrator shall complete a *draft* TEPG Summary Rating Form based on evidence gathered from multiple sources, including e.g., the teacher's self-assessment and evidence

portfolio. The administrator will also develop draft recommendations for professional development. This draft Summary Evaluation Form will be provided to the teacher in advance of the scheduled conference.

During the Summary Evaluation Conference the administrator and teacher shall discuss the teacher's self-assessment, the teacher's current year student learning and professional growth goals, classroom observations, artifacts and other items included in the teacher's evidence portfolio. At the conclusion of the Summary Evaluation Conference, the administrator shall: give a rating for each Standard and goal* in the TEPG Rubric; provide the teacher with the opportunity to add comments to the Summary Evaluation Form, and review the completed form with the teacher. The administrator and teacher will sign the final Summary Evaluation Form before it is placed in the teacher's personnel file.

*In some cases, the Summary Evaluation Conference will occur before the student assessment results and applicable goal rating are available. Final results will be added summary rating form and shared with the teacher before the end of the school year.

Use of TEPG Summary Rating

The summary rating for each teacher will be based on a maximum of 100 points broken down as follows:

Maximum Points	Area															
68	17 National Board Standards valued up to 4 points each as detailed below															
	<table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Rating</th><th>Description</th></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Distinguished</td><td>Clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of accomplished instructional practice</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Effective</td><td>Clear evidence of accomplished instructional practice</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Developing</td><td>Limited evidence of accomplished instructional practice</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Ineffective</td><td>Limited or no evidence of accomplished instructional practice</td></tr></table>	Level	Rating	Description	4	Distinguished	Clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of accomplished instructional practice	3	Effective	Clear evidence of accomplished instructional practice	2	Developing	Limited evidence of accomplished instructional practice	1	Ineffective	Limited or no evidence of accomplished instructional practice
Level	Rating	Description														
4	Distinguished	Clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of accomplished instructional practice														
3	Effective	Clear evidence of accomplished instructional practice														
2	Developing	Limited evidence of accomplished instructional practice														
1	Ineffective	Limited or no evidence of accomplished instructional practice														
10	Student Growth Measurements Identified in Teacher Scorecard															
14	Student Growth Goal															
8	Professional Growth Goal															
0	7C Student Survey (The 7C Survey will not receive any weight in a teacher's TEPG summary rating during the 2012-2013 school year. The Survey is expected to be given some weight in future years.)															

Note: The measurements used in the teacher scorecard will be identified by the District Steering Committee prior to the beginning of the applicable school year and will likely reflect differences among teachers who directly impact, partially impact or do not impact the growth of individual students in measurable areas. The Committee may also determine that a particular standard or goal is not applicable to a certain position. In such case, the points shall be scaled upward so that the relative relationship among the remaining elements is unchanged.

Each teacher will be classified as Distinguished, Effective, Developing or Ineffective based on their summary performance rating (i.e., number of points received) as shown below.

Summary Performance Rating	Classification
80+	Distinguished
70-79	Effective
60-69	Developing
Below 60	Ineffective

Professional growth plans will be tailored to teachers based on their overall summary performance rating. Teacher performance may be a consideration in providing additional leadership roles. Teachers performing at a Distinguished or Effective level of performance will be placed in a 3-year Individualized Growth Plan. Teachers performing at a Developing level will be placed in a 1-year Monitored Growth Plan, while teachers rated as Ineffective will be placed in a 1-year Improvement Plan. Descriptions of each of these professional growth plan follow.

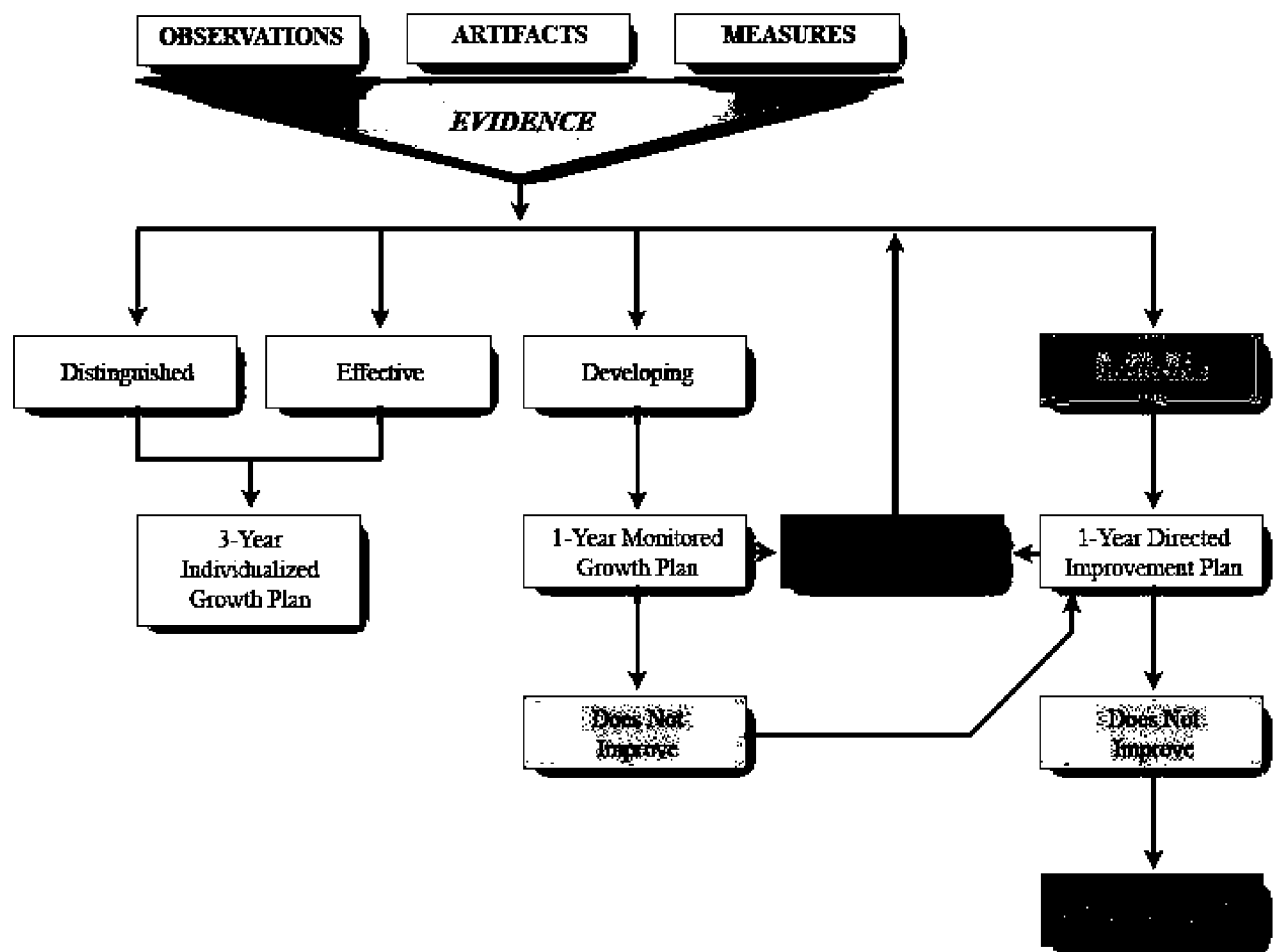


Figure 3
Tailored Professional Growth Plan

Individualized Growth Plan

Continuing contract teachers with a summary performance classification of “Effective” or “Distinguished” shall be exempt from Components #4 and #7 and, will develop a 3-year growth plan that includes all items in Component #2, plus a longer term individual professional development goal. They will be placed on a three year cycle for summary review. [Note: The review of goals shall be based upon the average over the 3-year cycle.] Teachers in this category will continue to participate in the other components. If an administrator has evidence that a teacher is no longer performing at this level, they may be placed into an annual evaluation cycle.

Monitored Growth Plan

A continuing contract teacher with a summary performance classification of “Developing” shall be placed on a Monitored Growth Plan.

A Monitored Growth Plan shall, at a minimum, identify the Standards to be improved, the goals to be accomplished, the activities the teacher should undertake, timeline to achieve a performance classification of “Effective” and another teacher assigned to assist the teacher.

A teacher on a Monitored Growth Plan who subsequently receives a summary performance classification of “Effective” or “Distinguished” shall have successfully completed the Plan. A teacher who subsequently receives a summary performance classification of “Developing” or “Ineffective” shall be placed on a Directed Improvement Plan.

Directed Improvement Plan

A continuing contract teacher with a summary performance classification of “Ineffective” or “Developing” for 2 sequential years shall be placed on a Directed Growth Plan.

The Directed Improvement Plan shall, at a minimum, identify the Standards to be improved, the goals to be accomplished, the activities the teacher shall undertake, timeline to achieve a performance classification of “Effective” and another teacher assigned to assist the teacher.

Any teacher on a Directed Improvement Plan will be observed by a second administrator, who will participate in the determination of the summary performance classification. A teacher who subsequently receives a summary performance classification of “Effective” or “Distinguished” shall have successfully completed the Plan. A teacher who subsequently receives a summary performance classification of “Developing” or “Ineffective” will, with the approval of the superintendent, be presented to the School Committee for a dismissal hearing.

Probationary Teachers

All probationary teachers shall be placed on a monitored growth for each year of the probationary period. An administrator must generally rate a final year probationary teacher with a summary performance classification of “Effective” or “Distinguished” on the most recent Teacher Summary Rating Form before recommending that teacher for continuing contract status.

Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Rubric

➤ NBPTS Core Proposition #1 - Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

Standard 1.1 - Teacher recognizes individual differences in their students and adjusts practice accordingly.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Unaware or unable to identify individual student learning needs within his/her classroom. Instructional practice is uniform without adaptation for individual student needs or learning styles.	Limited level of awareness of individual student needs and learning styles. Occasionally adapts instructional practice to meet these individual student needs and learning styles.	Moderate level of awareness of individual student needs and learning styles. Frequently adapts instructional practice to meet these individual student needs and learning styles.	High level of awareness of individual student needs and learning styles. Consistently adapts Instructional practice to meet these individual student needs and learning styles.

Possible evidence

- Uses information on students to inform lesson objectives, plans and instructional strategies
- Includes differentiated goals/activities to address lesson plans and provide for student success
- Uses multiple modes of teaching toward mastery
- Other

Standard 1.2 - Teacher has an understanding of how students develop and learn and know the backgrounds, abilities, and interests of students.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Makes connections that may be very weak or absent with the students and caregivers.	Makes occasional connections that are general and/or sporadic with the students and caregivers which increase teacher knowledge of the student.	Makes regular connections that are clear and ongoing with the students and caregivers which increase teacher knowledge of the student.	Makes frequent connections that are strong and ongoing with the students and caregivers which increase teacher knowledge of the student.

Possible evidence

- Engages other adults to learn about students
- Engages in conversations with students about high interest topics
- Communicates in multiple ways (with caregivers)
- Acknowledges differences in student backgrounds
- Meets the needs of parents whose first language is not English
- Other

Standard 1.3 - Teacher treats students equitably and fosters a stimulating and collaborative environment where all students are encouraged to participate.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Establishes an inconsistent classroom environment where few students participate and work, collaboratively, toward a safe and effective learning environment.	Establishes an inconsistent classroom environment where some students participate and work, collaboratively, toward a safe and effective learning environment.	Establishes a classroom community that is supportive. Most students take intellectual risks, participate and work collaboratively toward a safe and effective learning environment.	Establishes a classroom community that is equitable, accessible, and fair. Virtually all students take intellectual risks, participate and work, collaboratively, toward a safe and effective learning environment.

Possible evidence

- Environment encourages students to express their answers and ideas
- Models strategies to diffuse stress and build rapport with students
- Feedback is timely, specific and provided in various ways, such as written comments, conferences, non-verbal gestures
- Makes use of peer mentoring/evaluation techniques as a means of providing feedback to students learning
- Groups students in a variety of ways to promote collaboration and effective learning
- Other

Standard 1.4 - Teacher's mission extends beyond the cognitive capacity of students.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Develops classroom expectations that are inappropriate or absent, rarely addressing students' self-concept and motivation.	Develops classroom expectations that are inconsistent, sometimes addressing students' self-concept and motivation.	Develops classroom expectations that encourage character, aspirations, and civic virtues and address students' self-concept, motivation and an emerging sense of personal responsibility.	Develops classroom expectations that demand strong character, aspirations, and civic virtues and nurture students' self-concept, motivation and sense of personal responsibility.

Possible evidence

- Communicates belief in students' abilities to accomplish challenging learning goals
- Encourages students to persevere in challenging situations
- Uses positive tone used when speaking with students
- Connects learning to needs and events present in the school, local community and the world
- Models behaviors that encourage students to treat others with respect
- Employs positive behavioral interventions and supports to encourage personal responsibility
- Other

➤ NBPTS Core Proposition #2 - Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

Standard 2.1 - Teacher appreciates how knowledge in the subject is created, organized, and linked to other disciplines.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Presents factual information only. Rarely or never exposes students to critical thinking and higher order thinking skills.	Hints at, but does not explore organizing concepts and factual information. Provides limited exposure to critical thinking and higher order thinking skills. Presents some perspectives.	Addresses some, but not all organizing concepts as well as factual information. Frequently develops critical thinking and higher order thinking skills. Presents and critiques multiple perspectives.	Consistently addresses central organizing concepts as well as factual information, developing critical thinking and higher order thinking skills. Critiques and fosters multiple perspectives, questioning prevailing beliefs and assumptions to help themselves. Makes connections to other disciplines.

Possible evidence

- Structures content around essential questions
- Employs higher order questioning strategies (Bloom's Taxonomy)
- Plans and integrates instruction and activities to highlight cross curricular connections
- Stays current in their content specialty (ies)
- Integrates literacy and language strategies in all content areas
- Other

Standard 2.2 - Teacher commands specialized knowledge of how to convey a subject to students.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Chooses instructional techniques based solely on ease and availability.	Generally teaches compatible with approved curriculum, chooses appropriate instructional techniques for most students. Has some knowledge of curricular resources, new materials, methods, technological developments.	Teaches consistent with approved curriculum, displays adequate pedagogical content knowledge by using information about students to choose appropriate instructional techniques. Frequently anticipates common misconceptions. Has knowledge of curricular resources, new materials, methods, technological developments and incorporates these into daily practice.	Teaches faithful with approved curriculum, displays strong pedagogical content knowledge by using information about students to choose the most appropriate instructional techniques. Consistently anticipates and addresses common misconceptions. Regularly expands knowledge of curricular resources, new materials, methods, technological developments and incorporates these into daily practice.

Sample evidence

- Demonstrates short and long-term planning aligned with approved curriculum and/or standards
- Identifies appropriate learning goals and clearly communicates goals to students
- Uses strategies to check for understandings and address misconceptions
- Uses instructional strategies such as probing, redirection, and reinforcement to improve the quality of student responses
- Using a broad range of current tools and resources to support the learning goals
- Creates authentic tasks, problems and/or simulations
- Other

Standard 2.3 - Teacher generates multiple paths to knowledge.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Teacher demonstrates a particular method or strategy to be used by students to approach a set of problems or body of work.	Teacher provides more than one method or strategy to be used by students to approach a set of problems or body of work.	Teacher frequently provides multiple methods or strategies for students to approach issues from different angles, considering multiple criteria and multiple solutions.	Teacher consistently provides multiple methods or strategies for students to approach issues from different angles, considering multiple criteria and multiple solutions. Teacher challenges students to apply knowledge and pose new problems and solutions.

Possible evidence

- Provides different options for student activities to address multiple intelligences
- Multiple solutions/strategies offered to, and accepted from students
- Offers options within curriculum for student choice
- Plans learning activities that build on student strengths, talents and learning preferences (i.e., music, art, movement, etc.)
- Integrates relevant modern technology to engage students and enhance learning
- Other

➤ NBPTS Core Proposition #3 - Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

Standard 3.1 - Teacher calls on multiple methods to meet goals.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Uses limited instructional skills, learning environment remains the same regardless of the learning objectives.	Uses limited instructional skills, implementing them appropriately. Learning environment supports the learning objectives.	Uses a range of instructional skills knowing when to implement, structuring the learning environment to meet the learning objectives.	Uses a wide range of clear, consistent, and compelling instructional skills which successfully engage students in active learning. Knowing when to implement, structuring the learning environment to maximize the learning objectives.

Possible evidence

- Goals are posted and drive instruction
- Students demonstrate that they understand the goals.
- Uses efficient methods for transitions and materials distribution.
- Physical arrangement fosters student learning and allows the teacher to monitor students
- Effectively engages and mobilizes other appropriate adults as teaching assistants.
- Maximizes instructional time
- Provides the time and process for students to reflect on the learning that has occurred
- Other

Standard 3.2 - Teacher orchestrates learning in group settings.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Sets low or inappropriate expectations for interactions with peers and teacher. Has not developed classroom management systems.	Sets appropriate basic expectations for interactions with peers and teacher. Helps students take responsibility for their own learning. Has developed limited classroom management systems that minimize disruption.	Sets social norms and higher expectations for interactions with peers and teacher. Helps students take responsibility for their own learning and that of their peers. Has well developed classroom management systems that minimize disruptions and facilitate learning.	Sets social norms and highest expectations for interactions with peers and teacher to focus on and enhance learning. Helps students adopt roles and responsibilities for their own learning and that of their peers. Has developed sophisticated classroom management systems that minimize disruptions and facilitate learning.

Possible evidence

- Encourages students to build upon one another's answers and to stimulate dialogue among learners
- Teaches and models strategies to work effectively with others
- Deliberate decisions are made re student seating/grouping
- Teacher has clear purpose and plan for group work
- Employs effective and efficient routines and procedures that promote student interaction within groups
- Solicits connections from students and models how to listen and respond to other perspectives
- Encourages student independence combined with a sense of personal accountability to classmates
- Other

Standard 3.3 - Teacher places a premium on student engagement.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Uses limited strategies and engages few students. Does not build upon student interests. Limited encouragement of students to overcome reluctance.	Uses some strategies to engage students and monitors that engagement. Builds upon student interests. Encourages students to overcome personal setbacks, doubts or reluctance.	Uses a variety of strategies to motivate. Engages most students and monitors that engagement. Bridges between current student knowledge and ability and their potential by building upon student interests. Encourages students to overcome personal setbacks, doubts or reluctance.	Uses a wide variety of strategies to motivate and engage virtually all students and monitors that engagement. Bridges between current student knowledge and ability and their potential by building and expanding upon student interests. Encourages students to overcome personal setbacks, doubts or reluctance to push them to a higher level of learning.

Possible evidence

- Communicates high expectations to all students
- Stimulates student interest and engagement
- Makes clear to students what they are expected to learn in a way that generates interest and engagement
- Makes connections to real life situations (e.g., extends knowledge that sparks student curiosity for learning beyond required coursework)
- Learning is active and requires participation of all students
- Other

Standard 3.4 - Teacher regularly assesses student progress.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Little to no monitoring of individual or class learning. Uses limited evaluation methods. Provides limited feedback to students.	Seldom monitors individual or class learning and makes instructional, data-driven decisions. Uses some evaluation methods. Provides feedback to students.	Frequently monitors individual and class learning and makes instructional, data-driven decisions. Uses multiple evaluation methods. Provides constructive feedback to students, parents and self. Periodically engages students in self-assessment.	Consistently monitors individual and class learning and makes instructional, data-driven decisions. Understands the purposes, timing and focus of multiple evaluation methods and adjusts instruction accordingly. Provides constructive feedback in varied forms to students, parents and self. Regularly engages students in self-assessment.

Possible evidence

- Interprets students' facial expressions and other nonverbal behaviors to determine if further cues or explanations are needed.
- Moves among students to check progress and understanding and provides constructive feedback
- Uses multiple formative assessment techniques (such as observations, conversations, running records, summarizing, self and/or peer assessment, exit slips, and authentic tasks with rubrics) aligned to goals
- Uses assessment results in planning for individuals and groups and adjusts/differentiates instruction based on progress
- Other

➤ **NBPTS Core Proposition #4 - Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.**

Standard 4.1 - Teacher is continually making difficult choices that test his/her judgment.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Inconsistently follows provided content scope and sequence using a limited variation of instructional strategies without regard to individual student needs or competencies	Follows provided content scope and sequence. Makes limited judgments about curricular objectives and instructional strategies based on individual student needs and assessed competencies	Demonstrates thorough knowledge of content scope and sequence. Makes informed judgments about curricular objectives and materials and instructional strategies based on clear understanding of individual student needs and assessed prior competencies	Demonstrates exemplary knowledge of content scope and sequence. Makes insightful judgments grounded in established theory about curricular objectives and materials and instructional strategies based on clear and consistent understanding of individual student needs and assessed prior competencies

Possible evidence

- Models and facilitates student use of higher-level thinking.
- Facilitates and productively guides student discussion
- Pursues divergent patterns and novel approaches to curricular objectives
- Demonstrates informed risk taking
- Other

Standard 4.2 - Teacher seeks the advice of others and draws upon education research and scholarship to improve practice.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Does not reflect on their teaching in order to improve, nor solicit feedback from peers, and administrators.	Sometimes reflects on their teaching in order to improve, drawing upon best practices. Occasionally solicits feedback from peers and administrators.	Frequently reflects on their teaching in order to improve, drawing upon best practices. Often solicits feedback, including observations and critiques, from peers, students, parents, and administrators.	Continually reflects on their teaching in order to improve, drawing upon current research and best practices. Consistently solicits and incorporates feedback, including observations and critiques, from peers, students, parents, and administrators.

Possible evidence

- Shares ideas with and soliciting ideas from peers
- Initiates participation in PD workshops and coursework
- Creative/critical thinking strategies and activities utilized
- Reviews student feedback surveys incorporating results in professional development
- Invites peer observation and critique
- Other

➤ **NBPTS Core Proposition #5 - Teachers are members of learning communities.**

Std 5.1 - Teacher contributes to school effectiveness by collaborating with other professionals.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Contributions to professional development and school-wide improvements are limited to those mandated by district policies regarding professional development and attendance.	Works on professional development and school-wide improvements in pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning experiences for students.	Works and collaborates on professional development and school-wide improvements in a continuous pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning experiences for students. May offer to take on leadership roles within their learning communities.	Initiates, works and collaborates on professional development and school-wide improvements in a continuous pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning experiences for students. Assumes proactive and creative leadership roles within and outside of their learning communities. Challenges negative attitudes and models a solution-oriented disposition.

Possible evidence

- Appropriately applies strategies for conflict resolution
- Participates in curriculum work and discussions (common core, etc..) at school and district level
- Initiate conversations with guidance, social work, other resources to support students
- Utilize RTI process for academic and non-academic concerns to get support for students (literacy, math, guidance, behavior)
- Works with unified arts teachers to integrate content and learning experiences
- Keeps apprised of 504 and IEP accommodations
- Works with colleagues across disciplines to find alternative/creative solutions for at-risk students
- Other

Standard 5.2 - Teacher works collaboratively with parents.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Communicates in a limited fashion with guardians to inform them of their child's progress. Makes little or no attempt to address the physical, academic and social/emotional needs of each student.	Communicates with guardians inconsistently to inform them of their child's progress. Aware of the physical, academic, social/emotional needs of each student and attempts to address them.	Communicates with guardians by enlisting their support in fostering learning and good habits, informing them of their child's progress. Understands the familial barriers and the physical, academic, social/emotional needs of each student and employs skills and strategies to address them.	Communicates consistently with guardians, enlisting their support in fostering learning and good habits, informing them of school programs and their child's progress. Understands traditional cultural and familial barriers and the physical, academic, social/emotional needs of each student and employs skills and strategies to address them.

Possible evidence

- are partners with parents in the education of their children
- Provides constructive feedback to parents using rubrics, progress reports, conferences, communication logs.
- Considers the needs and schedules of families when planning classroom events
- Solicits parent feedback through surveys, meetings and/or technology
- Collaborates with parents to offer support for students outside of direct instruction
- Supports students before/after school

- Other

Standard 5.3 - Teacher takes advantage of community resources.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Unaware of community's character. Unfamiliar with the community, its diversity and students' backgrounds.	Somewhat aware of community's character and its effects on students. Somewhat understands the community, its diversity and students' backgrounds as resources for learning.	Cultivates expanded knowledge about the community's character and its effects on students. Capitalizes on the community, its diversity and students' backgrounds as resources for learning.	Cultivates comprehensive knowledge about the community's character and its effects on school and students. Capitalizes on and engages the community, its diversity and students' backgrounds and employs them as powerful resources for learning.

Possible evidence

- Utilizes older students to engage/mentor younger students
- Directs students toward needed community resources as appropriate
- Actively encourages and uses parent and community volunteers
- Promotes field trips that connect history and culture to the students' community
- Uses community based learning projects (e.g. oral history, cultural journalism, etc.)
- Other

Standard 5.4 - Teacher considers his/her professional ethics in interactions with students, colleagues, primary caregivers, and the public.

Ineffective Little or no evidence	Developing Limited evidence	Effective Clear evidence	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Limited understanding of basic standards of honesty, integrity, confidentiality and discretion in their words and actions; neglects to consider the needs of students when interacting with colleagues, students, and the public; bases judgment on hearsay rather than hard information; Demonstrates limited awareness and compliance with school and district policies regarding professional behavior and confidentiality.	Displays basic standards of honesty, integrity, confidentiality and discretion in their words and actions; sometimes considers the needs of students when interacting with colleagues, students, and the public; may base judgment on hearsay rather than hard information; attempts to demonstrate awareness and compliance with school and district policies regarding professional behavior and confidentiality.	Displays high standards of honesty, integrity, confidentiality and discretion in their words and actions; routinely considers the needs of students when interacting with colleagues, students, and the public; bases judgments and decisions on hard information rather than on hearsay and tradition; Consistently complies with school and district policies regarding professional behavior and confidentiality.	Facilitates a professional vision by displaying the highest standards of honesty, integrity, confidentiality and discretion in their words and actions; consistently considers the needs of students when interacting with colleagues, students, and the public; uses influence to convince others of the importance of maintaining this vision when interacting with colleagues, students and the public; consistently adheres to and upholds school and district policies regarding professional behavior and confidentiality.

Possible evidence

- Bases judgment and recommendations on hard information rather than on hearsay and tradition
- Operates with best interest of students in mind
- Models and creates conditions in which students and adults act altruistically
- Influences other members of the learning community to be good citizens and contribute in a positive manner to the broader community.
- Recognizes potential bias in the learning community and intervenes when practices may marginalize students
- Is a positive role model for the learning community
- Other

Student Growth Measurement (based upon present measurements)

Goal Achievement (1-10 points)

Ineffective Little or no evidence (1 Point)	Developing Limited evidence (3 Points)	Effective Clear evidence (8 Points)	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (10 Points)
No improvement over base and less than 50% of students are meeting growth target(s).	Improvement over base but less than 55% of students are meeting growth target(s).	55% or more of students are meeting growth target(s)	Maximum stated goal of 65% reached or surpassed on all student growth measurements.

Student Learning Goal

Goal Development (1-4 points)

Ineffective Little or no evidence (1 Point)	Developing Limited evidence (2 Points)	Effective Clear evidence (3 Points)	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (4 Points)
. Teacher did not bring a student learning goal to the Fall Conference.. A goal was developed with the Administrator.	Teacher did bring a student learning goal to the Fall Conference, but the goal was not clearly defined and measurable. A goal was developed with the Administrator.	Teacher did bring a clearly defined and measurable student learning goal to the Fall Conference. The goal was edited in the Fall Conference with Administrator.	Clearly defined and measurable student learning goal and directly tied to school and district objectives.

Goal Achievement (1-10 points)

Ineffective Little or no evidence (1 Point)	Developing Limited evidence (3 Points)	Effective Clear evidence (8 Points)	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (10 Points)
No measurable progress toward achieving goal.	Some measurable progress toward achieving goal.	Goal achieved.	Goal surpassed.

Professional Growth Goal

Goal Development (1-4 points)

Ineffective Little or no evidence (1 Point)	Developing Limited evidence (2 Points)	Effective Clear evidence (3 Points)	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (4 Points)
No defined professional growth goal.	Somewhat defined professional growth goal.	Clearly defined and measurable professional growth goal.	Clearly defined and measurable professional growth goal with application to school and district objectives.

Goal Achievement (1-4 points)

Ineffective Little or no evidence (1 Point)	Developing Limited evidence (2 Points)	Effective Clear evidence (3 Points)	Distinguished Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (4 Points)
No measurable progress toward achieving goal.	Some measurable progress toward achieving goal.	Goal achieved.	Goal surpassed.

TEPG Summary Rating Form

For use in the teacher self-assessment, classroom observations, and the summary review.

Name:

Date completed:

School:

School year:

Evaluator:

Evaluator title:

Status (check one)

☐ Probationary Teacher

☐ Continuing Contract Teacher

Part I: Instructional Practice Performance Ratings

Core Proposition 1: *Teachers are committed to students and their learning*

Ineffective-1
Developing -2
Effective-3
Distinguished-4

1.1	Teacher recognizes individual differences in students and adjusts their practice accordingly.				
1.2	Teacher has an understanding of how students develop and learn and know the backgrounds, abilities, and interests of students.				
1.3	Teacher treats students equitably and fosters a stimulating and collaborative environment where all students are encouraged to participate.				
1.4	Teacher's mission extends beyond the cognitive capacity of their students.				

➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

Core Proposition 2: <i>Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to student</i>		1	2	3	4
2.1	Teacher appreciates how knowledge in their subject is created, organized, and linked to other disciplines.				
2.2	Teacher commands specialized knowledge of how to convey a subject to students.				
2.3	Teacher generates multiple paths to knowledge.				

➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

Core Proposition 3: *Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning* 1 2 3 4

3.1	Teacher calls on multiple methods to meet their goals.				
3.2	Teacher orchestrates learning in group settings.				
3.3	Teacher places a premium on student engagement.				
3.4	Teacher regularly assesses student progress.				

➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

Core Proposition 4: *Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience* 1 2 3 4

4.1	Teacher is continually making difficult choices that test their judgment.				
4.2	Teacher seeks the advice of others and draws upon education research and scholarship to improve their practice.				

➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

Core Proposition 5: *Teachers are members of learning communities* 1 2 3 4

5.1	Teacher contributes to school effectiveness by collaborating with other professionals.				
5.2	Teacher works collaboratively with parents.				
5.3	Teacher takes advantage of community resources.				
5.4	Teacher considers their professional ethics in all interactions				

➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

6.0 Student Learning Goal 1 2 3 4

6.1	Goal Development				
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➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

1 2 3 4

6.2	Goal Achievement				
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➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

7.0 Professional Growth Goal

1 2 3 4

7.1	Goal Development				
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➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

1 2 3 4

7.2	Goal Achievement				
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➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

Required Signatures

Teacher Signature:

Date

Administrator / Evaluator Signature:

Date

Teacher Comments Attached (circle one):

Yes

No

Administrator / Evaluator Signature :

Date

(Signature indicates question above regarding comments has been addressed)

Note: The teacher's signature on this form represents neither acceptance nor approval of the report. It does, however, indicate that the teacher has reviewed the report with the evaluator and may reply in writing. The signature of the administrator or evaluator verifies that the report has been reviewed and that the proper process has been followed according to the policy.

TEPG GOAL SETTING FORM

STUDENT LEARNING

School Student Learning Goal	1	
	2	
	3	

My student learning goal is...
How is your goal linked to your school's student learning goal?
How will attainment of my goal be measured?
How will progress toward my goal be monitored?
Describe the methods / strategies / activities that will be used to accomplish my goal?
What resources or support will be needed to reach my goal?

TEPG GOAL SETTING FORM

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Teacher Date ____ / ____ / ____

Administrator Date ____ / ____ / ____

My professional growth goal is...
What National Board Standard(s) does my goal relate to?
How will attainment of my goal be measured?
How will progress toward my goal be monitored?
Describe the methods / strategies / activities that will be used to accomplish my goal?
What resources or support will be needed to reach my goal?

_____/_____/_____
Teacher Date

_____/_____/_____
Administrator Date



Peer Observation Summary

School

Year:

Teacher:

List three teachers whom you would be comfortable observing you and at least three standards in Core Propositions #1, #2 or #3 that you would like to have reviewed:

Teacher 1:

Teacher 2:

Teacher 3:

Standards:

Teacher's Initials

Date

Peer Observer

(selected by Principal)

Three Standards:

(selected by Principal)

Principal's Initials

Date

To Be Completed by Teacher and Peer Observer:

DATES:

Pre Conference:

Observation:

Post Conference:

Teacher Signature

Observer Signature

Original to Human Resources



Pilot Peer Observation Summary

Objective: Teachers will observe a colleague from their cohort in order to become more familiar with TEPG, Core Propositions #1, #2 and/or #3 and to offer input to refine the peer observation process.

School Year:

Teacher Observing:

Teacher Observed:

To Be Completed by Teacher and Peer Observer:

DATES:

Pre Conference:

Observation:

Post Conference:

Teacher Signature

Observer Signature

Comments to improve and further refine the peer observation process:

Original to Human Resources for processing of \$100 grant-funded stipend to be paid the observer.

Appendix 6

Maine Educator Effectiveness Council Agendas



MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

MEETING #1

TUESDAY MAY 29, 2012; 1-4 PM; CROSS BLDG. RM #541

Outcomes

1. Review charge, membership, and scope of the work expected of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council;
2. Understand the criteria of the ESEA Flexibility application program, especially as it relates to Principle III and Educator Effectiveness;
3. Develop initial list of guiding principles for a statewide educator effectiveness system and identify critical questions, resources, and activities that will support the work of the Council; and,
4. Determine dates for future meetings

Agenda

- | | |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 PM | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda |
| 1:10 PM | Review the charge of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council and describe its relationship to the overall strategy for completing and submitting an ESEA Flexibility application |
| 1:45 PM | Develop initial norms and decision-making processes for the group |
| 2:00 PM | Brief overview of the ESEA Flexibility program and application with particular focus on Educator Effectiveness. |
| 2:30 PM. | Break |
| 2:45 PM | Development of guiding principles supporting the design and implementation of a fair, rigorous, and meaningful system of evaluation and support. Enumerate preliminary list of activities, questions, and resources to support the Council's work |
| 3:45 PM | Determination of meeting schedule and next steps |

***Next Meeting: TBA**



MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

MEETING #2

WEDNESDAY JUNE 20, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM
CROSS BLDG. ROOM #103-A

Outcomes

1. Elect Co-Chair;
2. Review norms and determine process for making decisions and for reporting recommendations;
3. Review and discuss intriguing ideas worth further exploration from readings;
4. Begin learning about current educator effectiveness being done around Maine;
5. Revisit the draft list of candidate principles to guide the work of the Council and – to the extent possible – determine whether consensus is possible in more or more areas; and,
6. Determine dates for future meetings

Agenda

9 AM	Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda
9:10 AM	Review the responsibilities of the Co-Chair and elect a member to serve in this capacity
9:30 AM	Discussion: from your readings, what ideas come to mind that are worth exploring further?
10:30 AM	Break
10:45 AM	Begin to discuss the set of Council duties using the MEEC deliverables and emerging principles as a framework
12:15 PM	Lunch
1 PM	Overview of the Maine Schools for Excellence initiative: Lessons learned and implications for the work of the Council
2 PM	Continue to discuss the set of Council duties using the MEEC deliverables and emerging principles as a framework
2:45 PM	Determination of meeting schedule and next steps
3 PM	Closure

***Next Meeting: TBA**



MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

MEETING #3

MONDAY JULY 9, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM
CROSS BLDG. ROOM 103

Outcomes

1. Clarify the roles of the facilitator and co-chairs;
2. Review norms and determine the council's policy for making decisions and for reporting recommendations;
3. Review and discuss draft framework for organizing the work process;
4. Discuss and determine the means by which the council is to "chunk" the work before it (workgroups, whole group discussion, etc);
5. Begin work on definitions of 'teacher' and 'principal'
6. Determine a process or set of standards for determining the proper balance between local control and statewide uniformity
7. Determine dates for future meetings

Agenda

9 AM	Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda
9:05 AM	Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups
9:15 AM	Briefing on NEA Representative Assembly
9:25 AM	Discussion on roles of facilitator and co-chairs
9:35 AM	Review draft of the council's decision-making policy
9:45 AM	Review and discussion on "Decision Matrix" document
10:30 AM	Break
10:45 AM	Discussion on how the Council can best organize itself and its work
11:45 AM	Lunch
12:30 PM	Discussion: Definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' for this work
1:30 PM	Discussion: Standards for determining the proper balance between statewide uniformity and local flexibility
2:30 PM	Determination of meeting schedule and next steps
2:45 PM	Comments from the public
3 PM	Closure



MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

MEETING #4

FRIDAY JULY 20, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM
CROSS BLDG. ROOM 103

Outcomes

1. Finalize language regarding Council decision-making policy
2. Understand the basic structure and elements of a performance evaluation and professional growth system (PE/PG system)
3. Discuss and decide what professional practice standards must be used in PE/PG systems for teachers and for principals
4. Determine dates for future meetings

Agenda

- | | |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9 AM | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda |
| 9:05 AM | Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups |
| 9:15 AM | Review draft of the Council's decision-making policy |
| 9:25 AM | Quick review of the basic elements of a PE/PG system |
| 9:35 AM | Discuss the pros and cons of various professional practice standards for teachers: National Board, InTASC, Danielson Framework, others? |
| 10:30 AM | Break |
| 10:45 AM | Discuss/ Decide, with regard to professional practice standards for teachers, whether to recommend that the State: <ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Adopt one of these sets of standardsB. Allow districts to choose from among a fixed list of sets of standardsC. Create our own set of standards, by blending models or otherwiseD. Develop a set of criteria for the adoption of standards, which would allow districts to choose one of these sets of standards or a set like these that they either develop or adopt |
| 11:45 AM | Lunch |
| 12:30 PM | Discuss the pros and cons of various professional practice standards for principals, e.g., ISSLC, National Board, others? |
| 1:30 PM | Discuss/ Decide, with regard to professional practice standards for principals, whether to recommend that the State: <ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Adopt one of these sets of standardsB. Allow districts to choose from among a fixed list of sets of standardsC. Create our own set of standards, by blending models or otherwiseD. Develop a set of criteria for the adoption of standards, which would allow districts to choose one of these sets of standards or a set like these that they either develop or adopt |
| 2:30 PM | Determination of meeting schedule and next steps |
| 2:45 PM | Comments from the public |
| 3 PM | Closure |



MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

MEETING #6

FRIDAY AUGUST 10, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM

CROSS BLDG. ROOM 600

Outcomes

1. Review draft language regarding the use of rubrics aligned with professional practice standards
2. Review preliminary determination of educators impacted by definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' in this system
3. Increase understanding of the elements comprising the Colorado educator effectiveness model
4. Continue to discuss possible 'other measures' for inclusion in the system
5. Use the decision matrix to draft a work plan to determine the next topics to address during the next meeting and through the end of October.

Agenda

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| 9 AM | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda |
| 9:05 AM | Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups |
| 9:25 AM | Recap initial determination of educators impacted by the definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' in the system |
| 9:40 AM | Review draft language regarding the use of rubrics aligned with professional practice standards for teachers and principals. Reach decision. |
| 10:30 AM | Break |
| 10:45 AM | Overview of Colorado model focusing on description of other measures, how they are determined, and how they are factored into a rating
Review preliminary list of other measures used. Discuss whether to include any – or suggest others – to include in Maine's system |
| 11:50 AM | Comments from the public |
| 12 PM | Lunch |
| 12:45 PM | Continue other measures discussion |
| 2:00 PM | Determination of agenda items for next meeting, meeting dates, and work plan |
| 2:45 PM | Comments from the public |
| 3 PM | Closure |

***Next Meeting: Friday August 24, 2012, 9 AM – 3 PM**

Cross Office Building Room 103



MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

MEETING #6

FRIDAY AUGUST 10, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM

CROSS BLDG. ROOM 600

Outcomes

1. Review draft language regarding the use of rubrics aligned with professional practice standards
2. Review preliminary determination of educators impacted by definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' in this system
3. Increase understanding of the elements comprising the Colorado educator effectiveness model
4. Continue to discuss possible 'other measures' for inclusion in the system
5. Use the decision matrix to draft a work plan to determine the next topics to address during the next meeting and through the end of October.

Agenda

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|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9 AM | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda |
| 9:05 AM | Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups |
| 9:25 AM | Recap initial determination of educators impacted by the definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' in the system |
| 9:40 AM | Review draft language regarding the use of rubrics aligned with professional practice standards for teachers and principals. Reach decision. |
| 10:30 AM | Break |
| 10:45 AM | Overview of Colorado model focusing on description of other measures, how they are determined, and how they are factored into a rating
Review preliminary list of other measures used. Discuss whether to include any – or suggest others – to include in Maine's system |
| 11:50 AM | Comments from the public |
| 12 PM | Lunch |
| 12:45 PM | Continue other measures discussion |
| 2:00 PM | Determination of agenda items for next meeting, meeting dates, and work plan |
| 2:45 PM | Comments from the public |
| 3 PM | Closure |

***Next Meeting: Friday August 24, 2012, 9 AM – 3 PM**

Cross Office Building Room 103



MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

MEETING #6

FRIDAY AUGUST 10, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM

CROSS BLDG. ROOM 600

Outcomes

1. Review the progress to date;
2. Determine any modifications in the way the work is organized;
3. Provide an update on the status of Maine's ESEA Flexibility request and gather feedback on the plan described in the summary; and,
4. Review the information about student learning and growth in the State Longitudinal Data System and generate related questions, needs, and issues for subsequent meetings.

Agenda

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|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9 AM | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda |
| 9:05 AM | Reviewing the progress of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council. Implications for next steps |
| 10:30 AM | Break |
| 10:45 AM | Reviewing the charge of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council. Implications for next steps (continued) |
| 11:30 AM | Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups & feedback on summary |
| 11:50 AM | Comments from the public |
| 12 PM | Lunch |
| 12:45 PM | Informational presentation on Maine's State Longitudinal Data System. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarifying questions• Generation of list of needs, questions, and issues for the MEEC to address during future meetings |
| 2:45 PM | Comments from the public |
| 3 PM | Closure |

***Next Meeting: Friday September 14, 2012, 9 AM – 3 PM**

Cross Office Building Room 103